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Geronimo Stilton

THE FIRST SAMURAI



PAPERCUT 

Geronimo Stilton



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THE FIRST SAMURAI

By Geronimo Stilton



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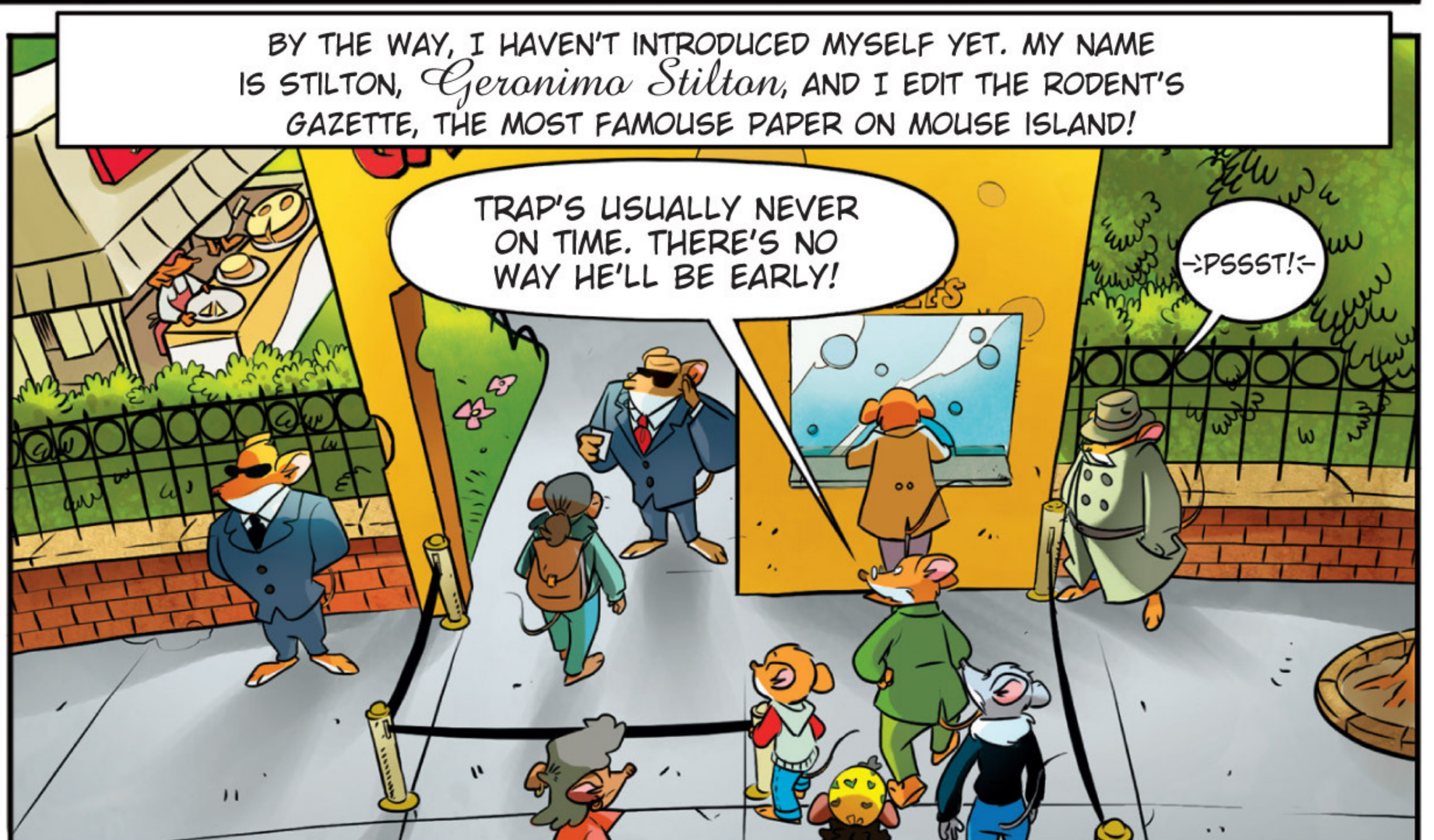
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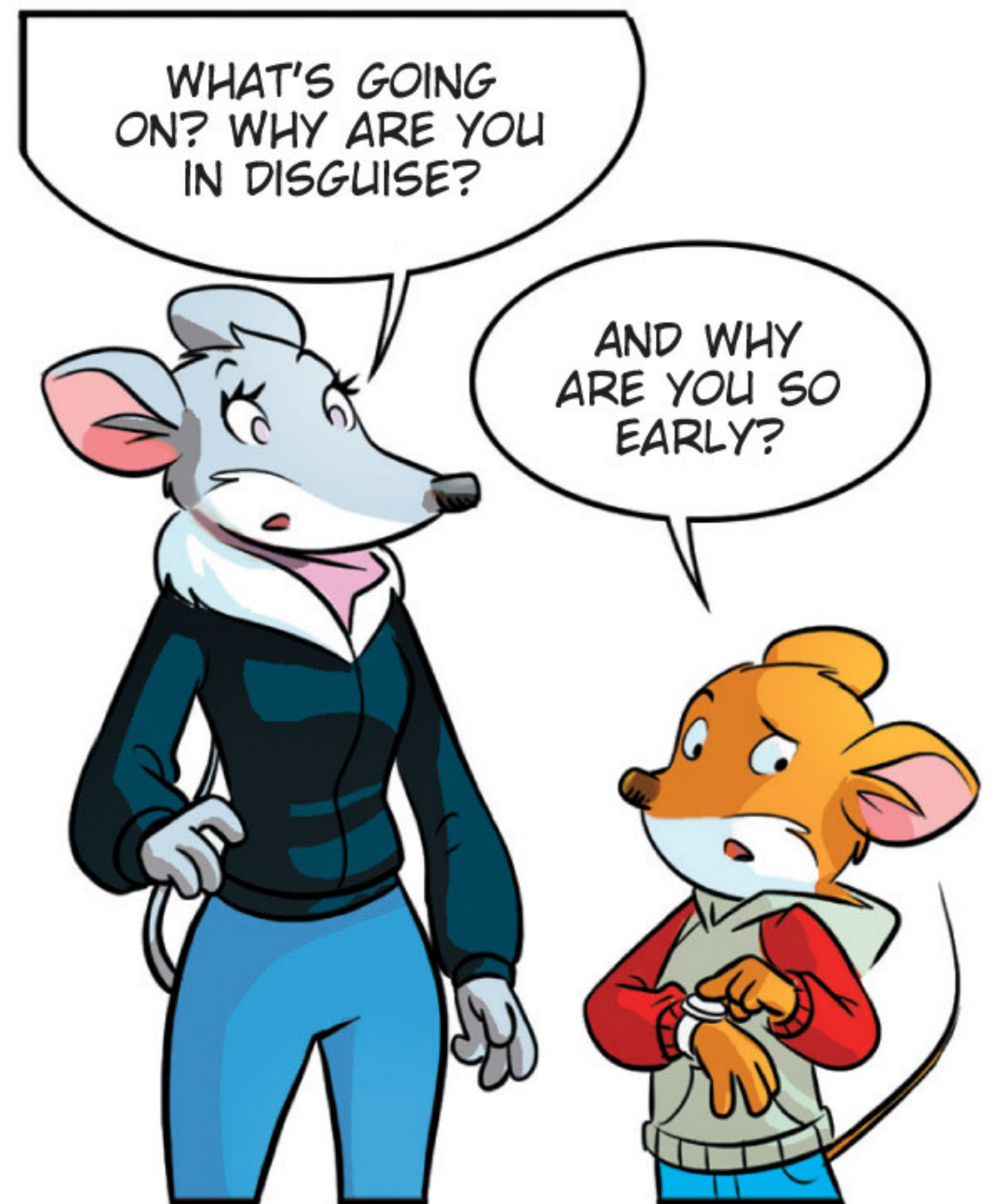
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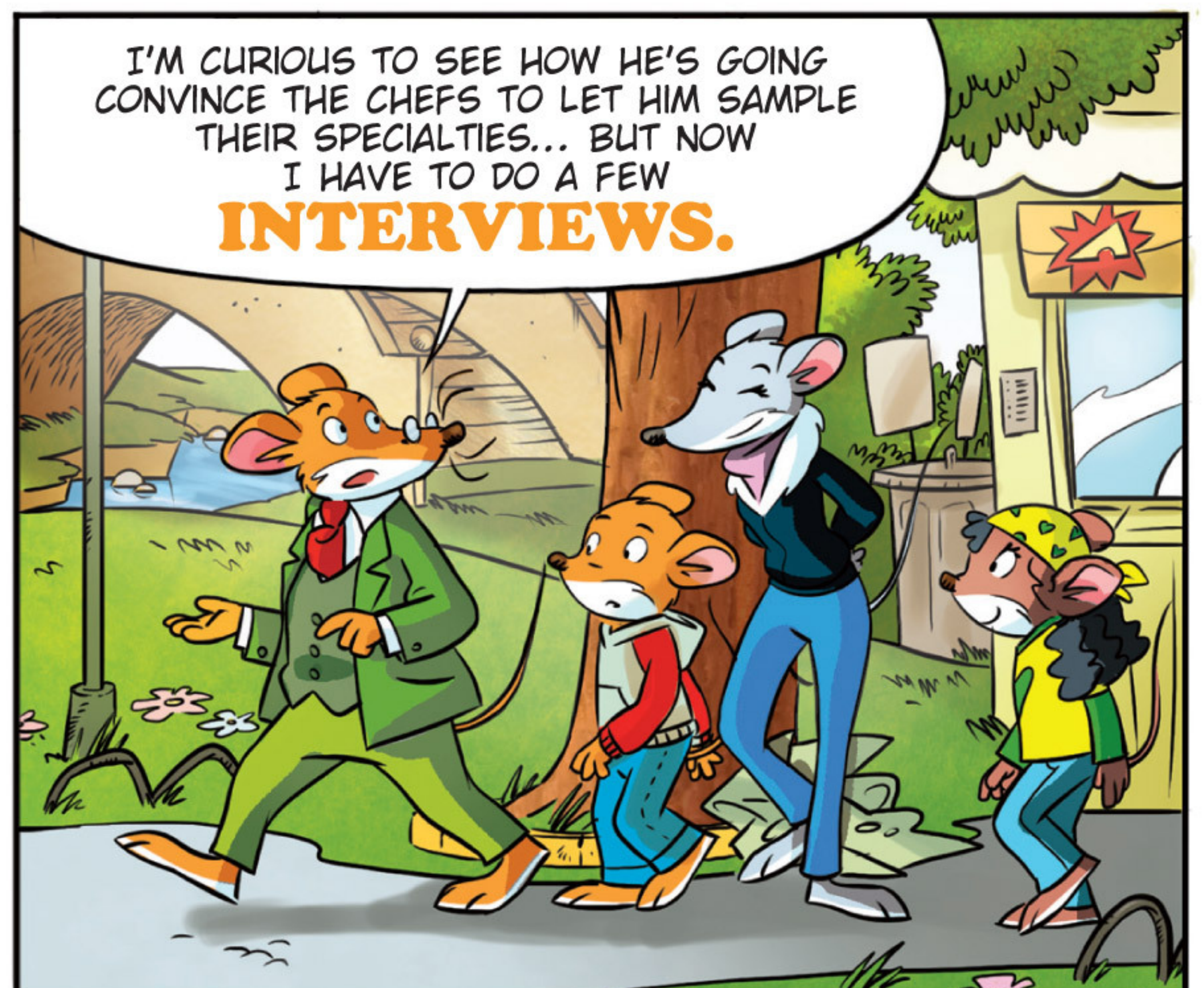
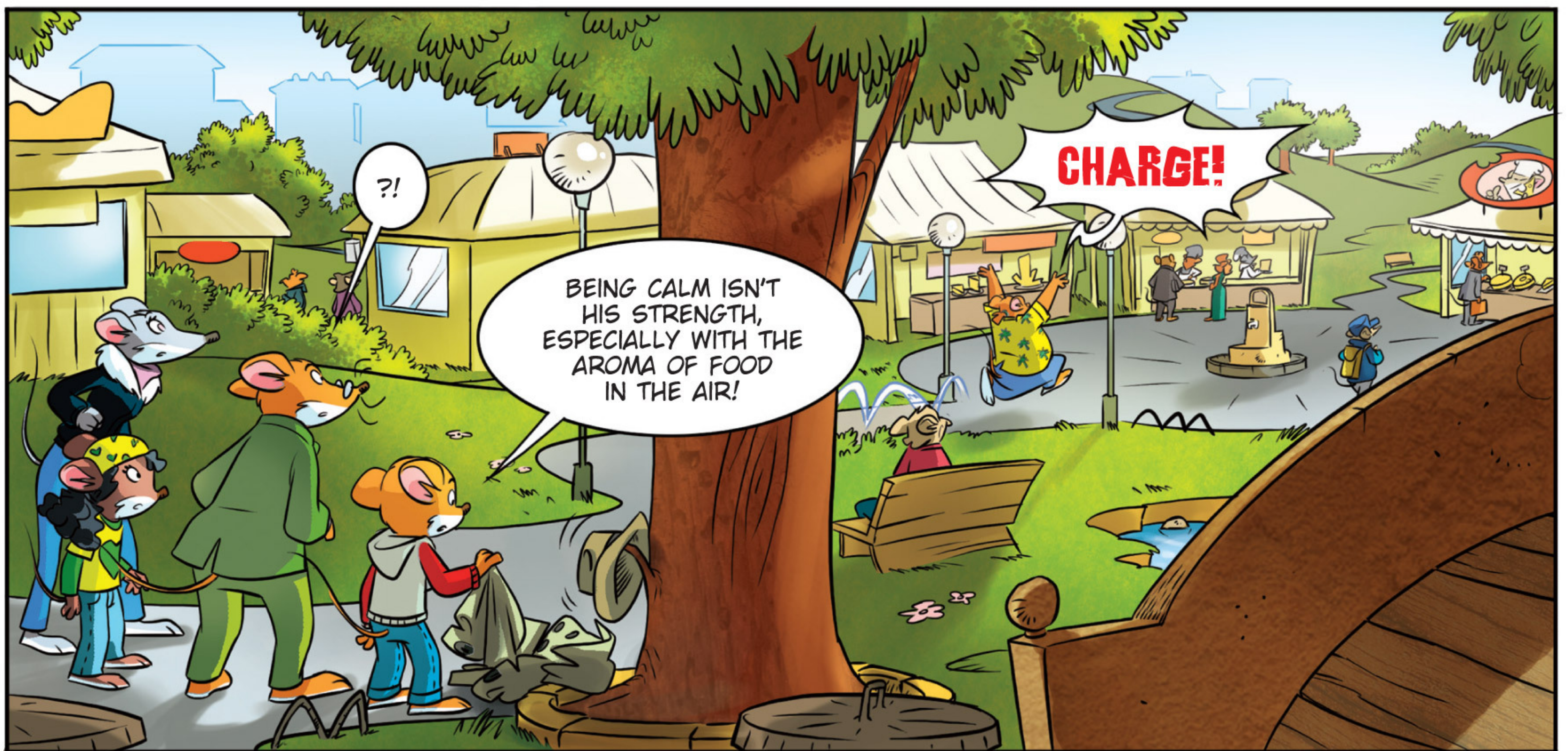
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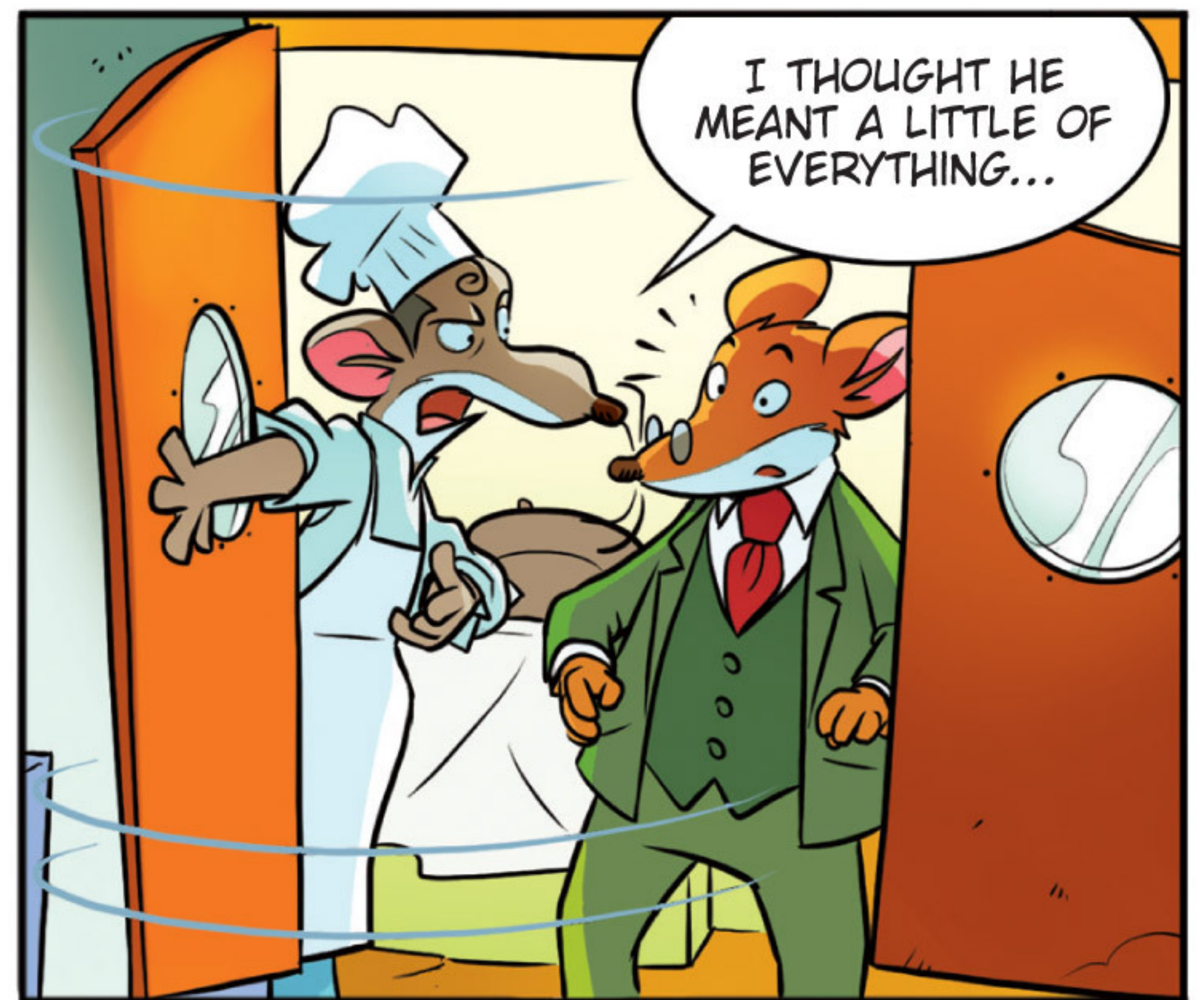
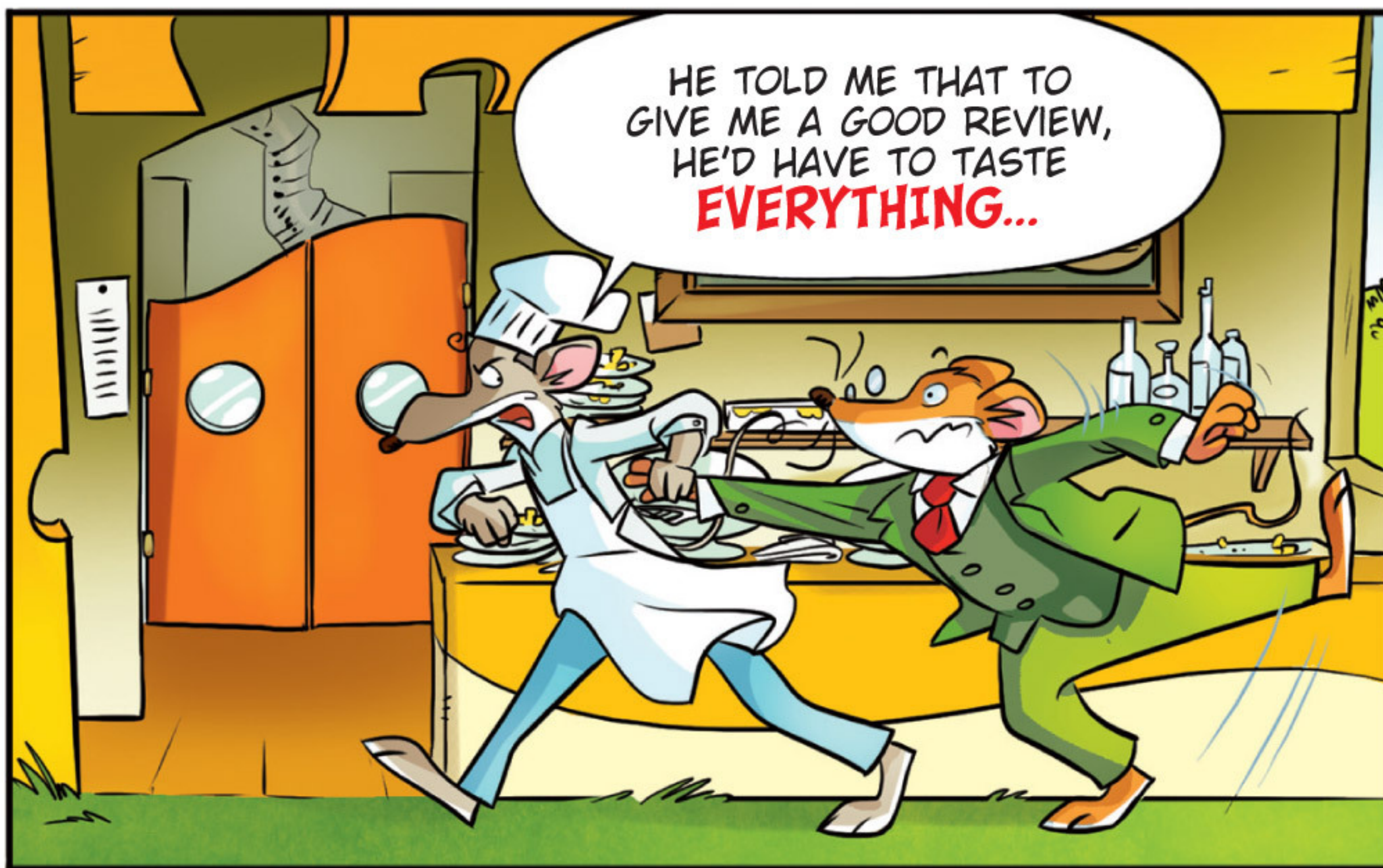
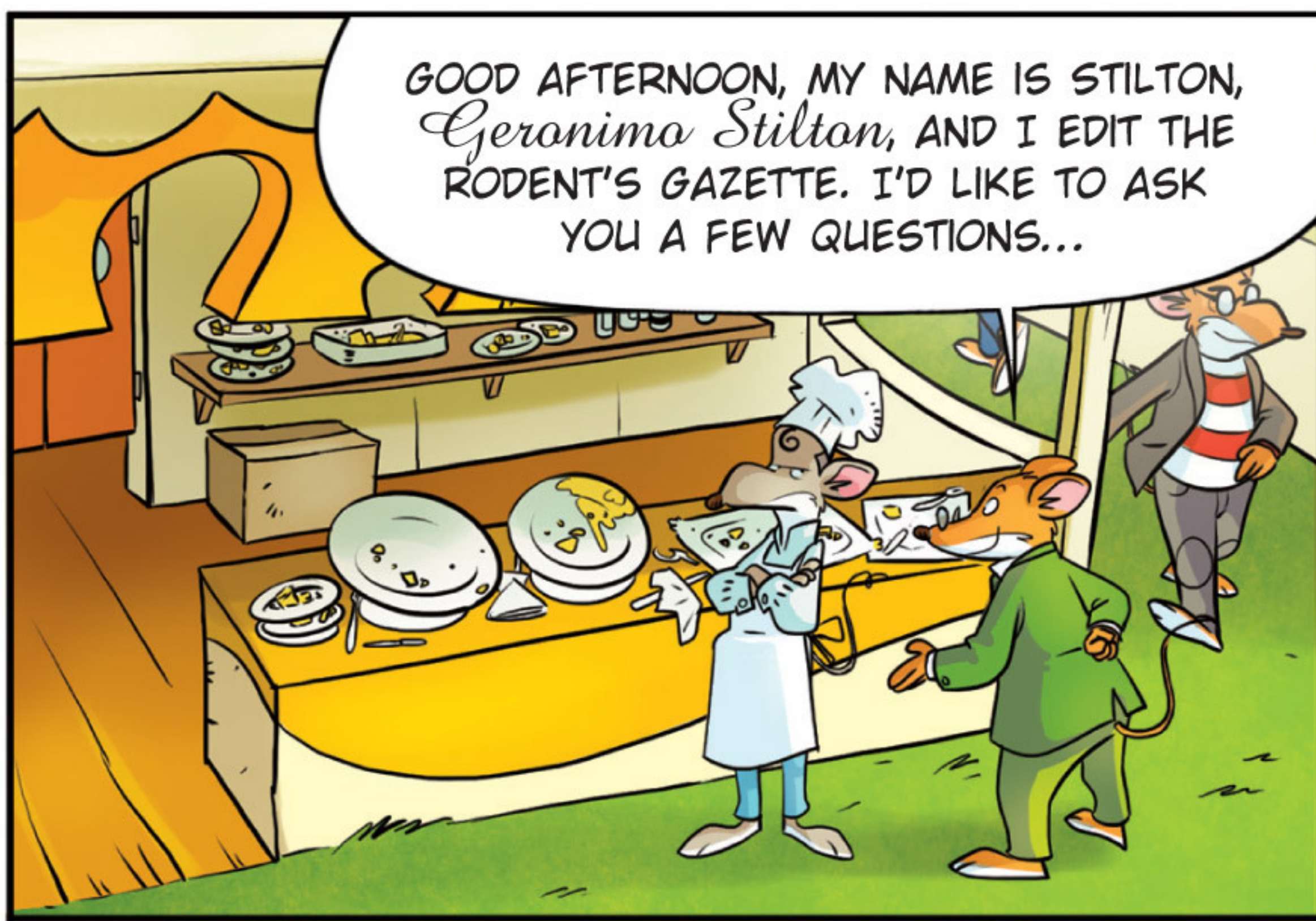
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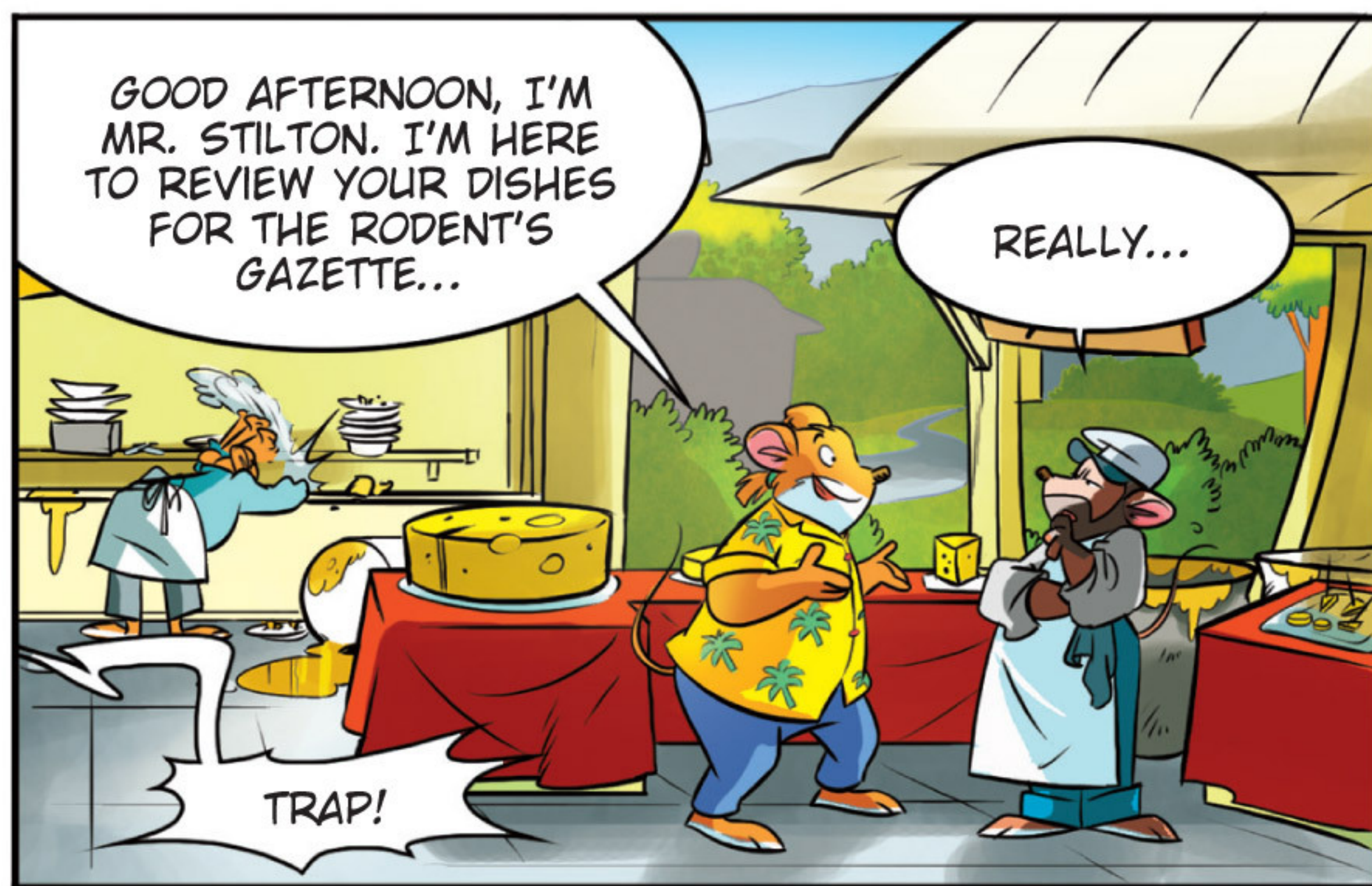
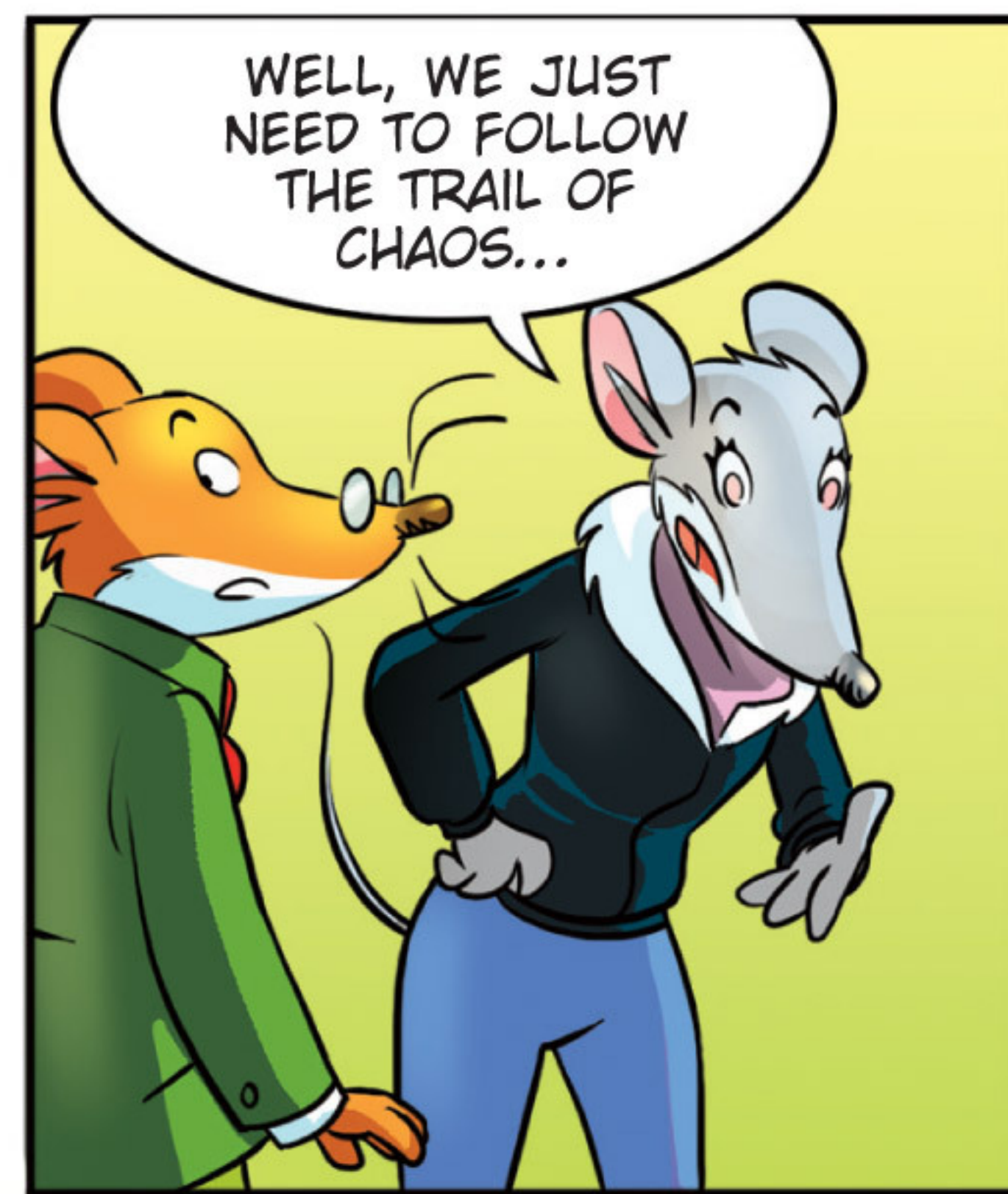
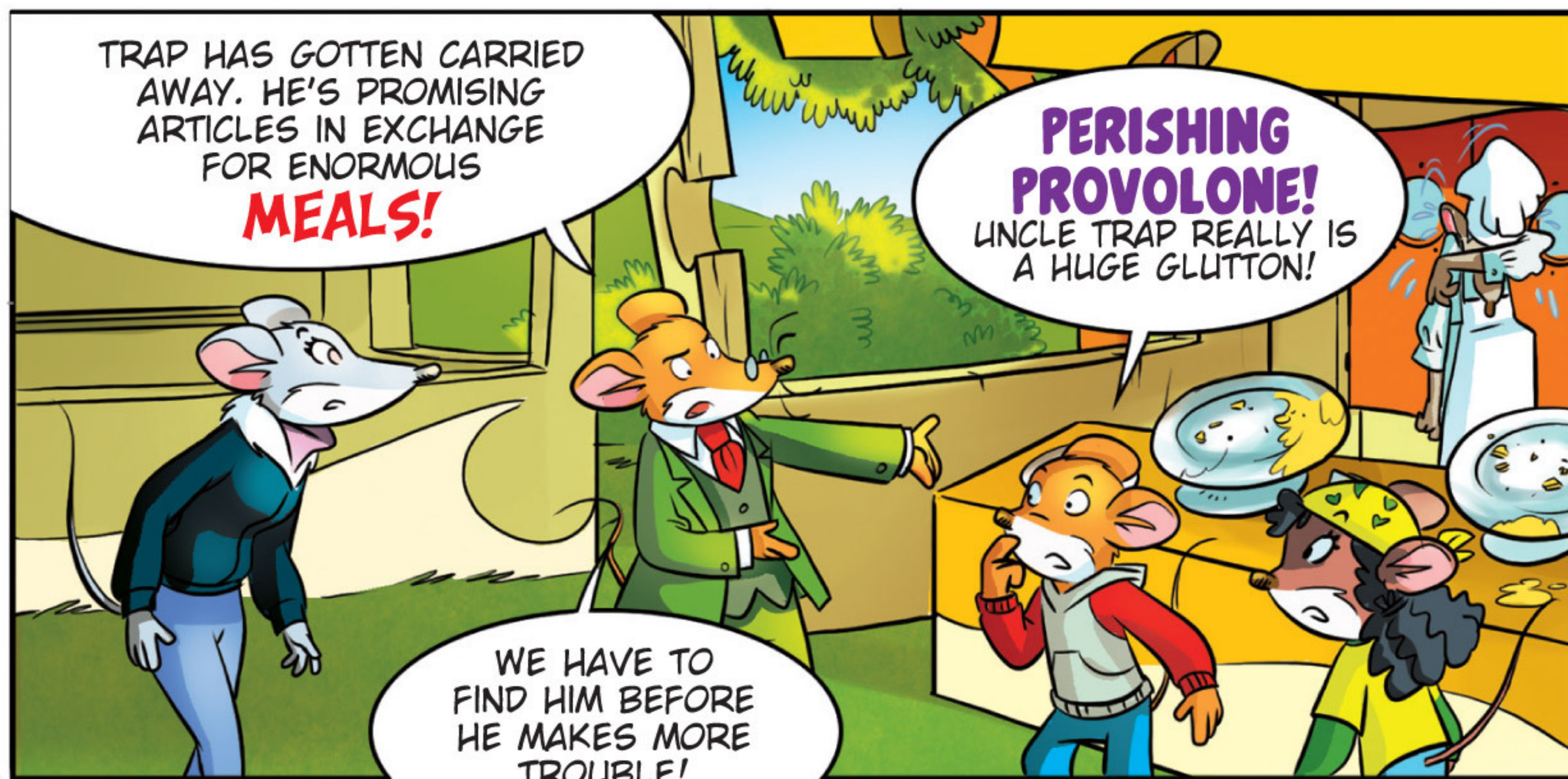


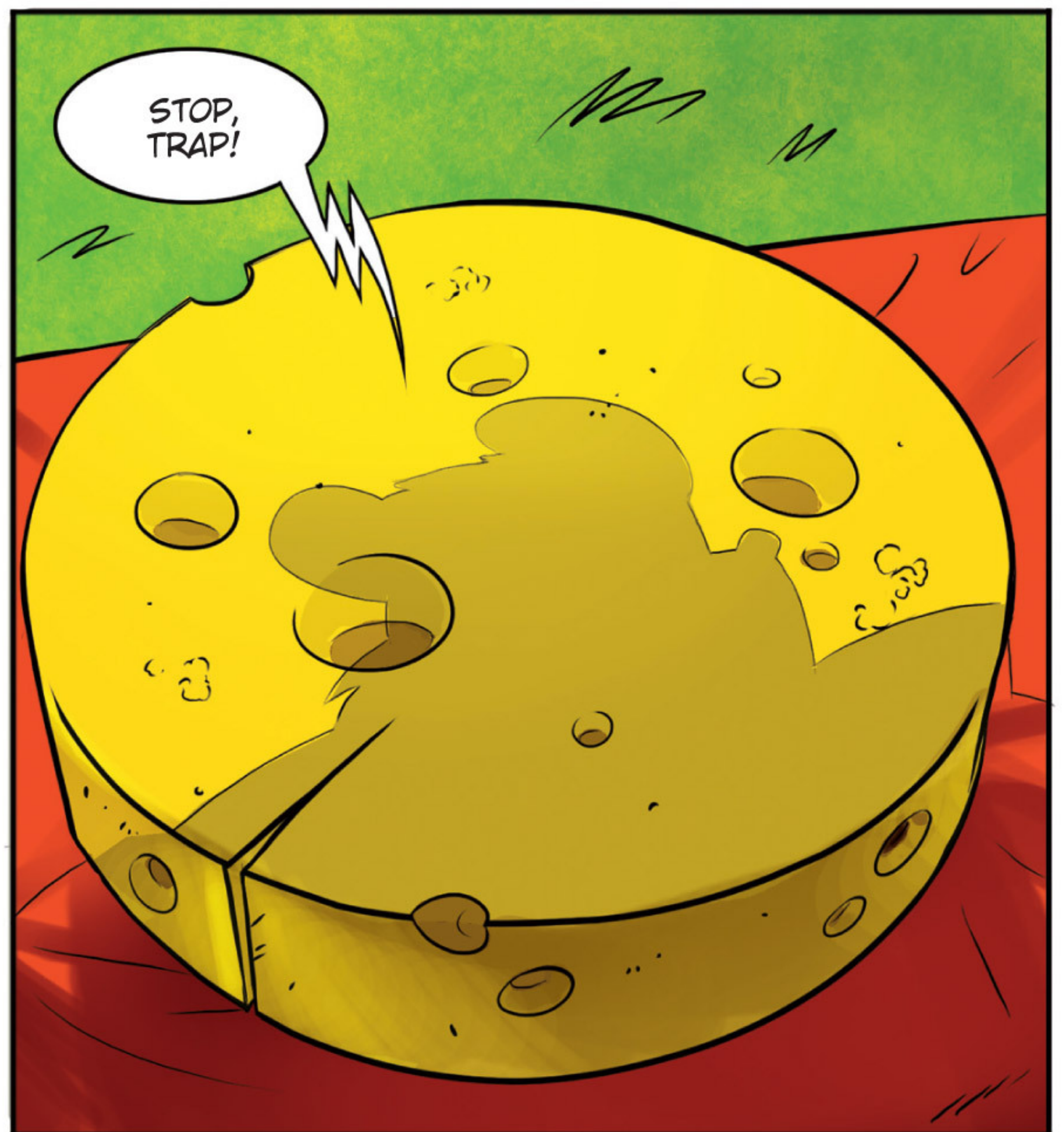
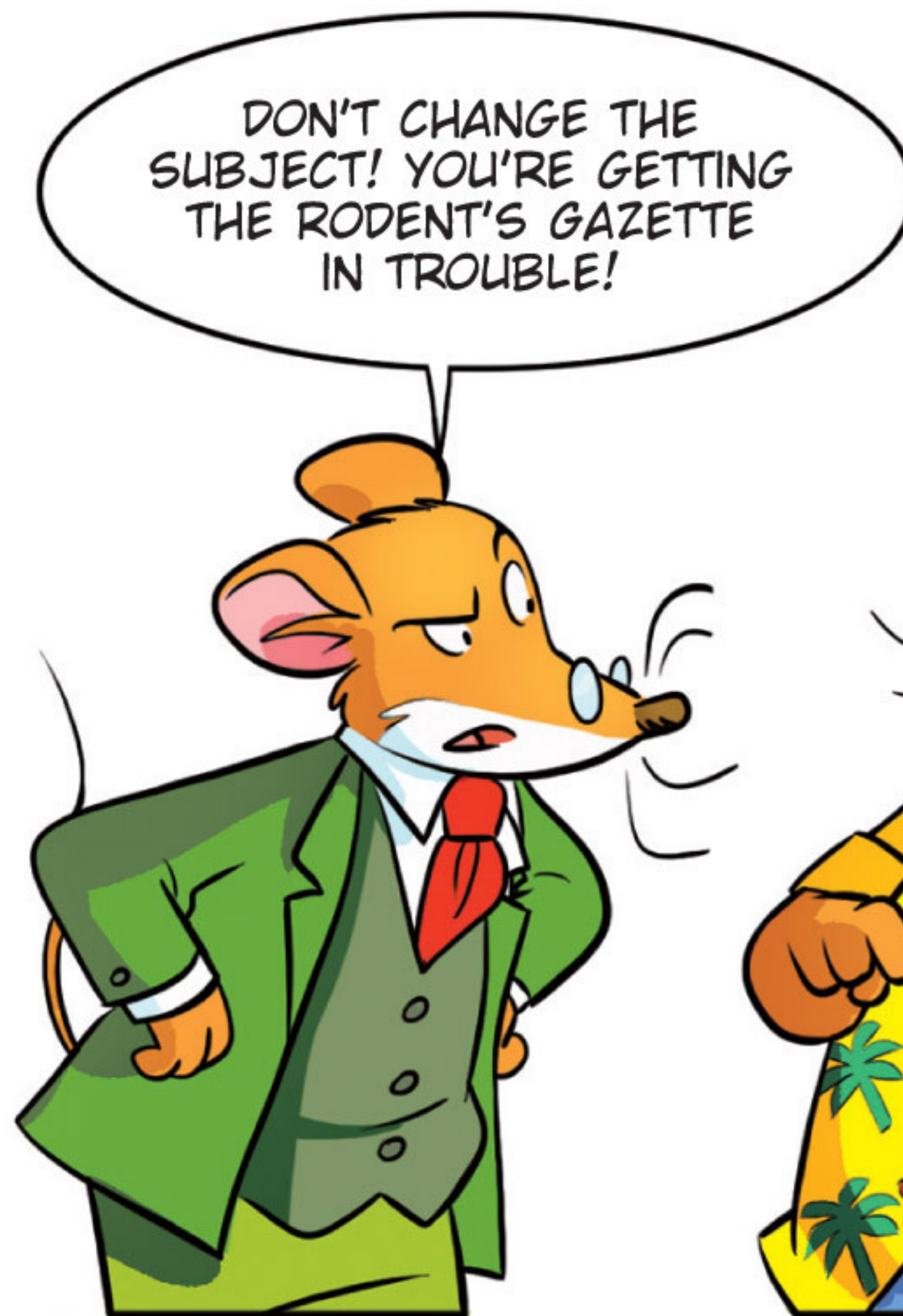


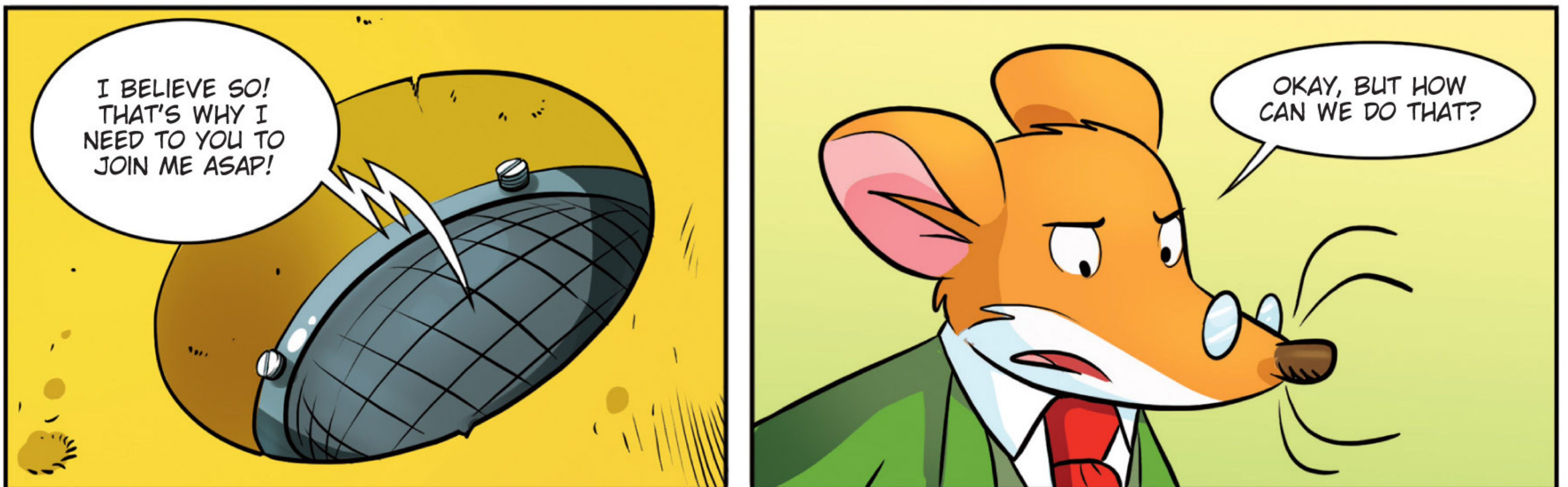
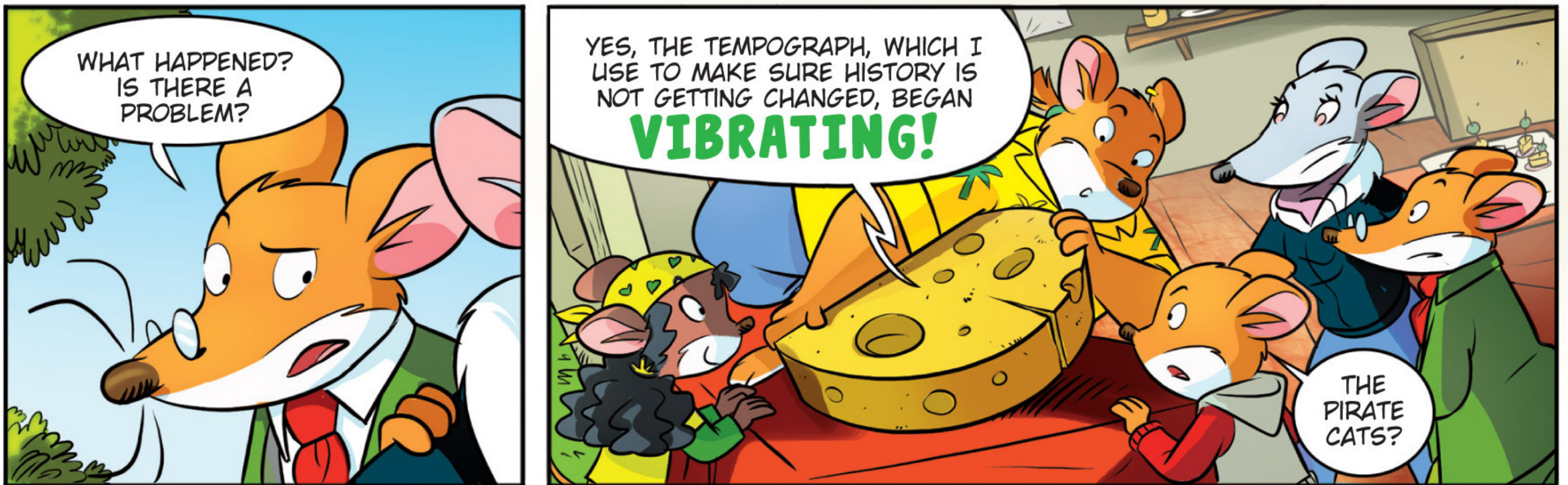
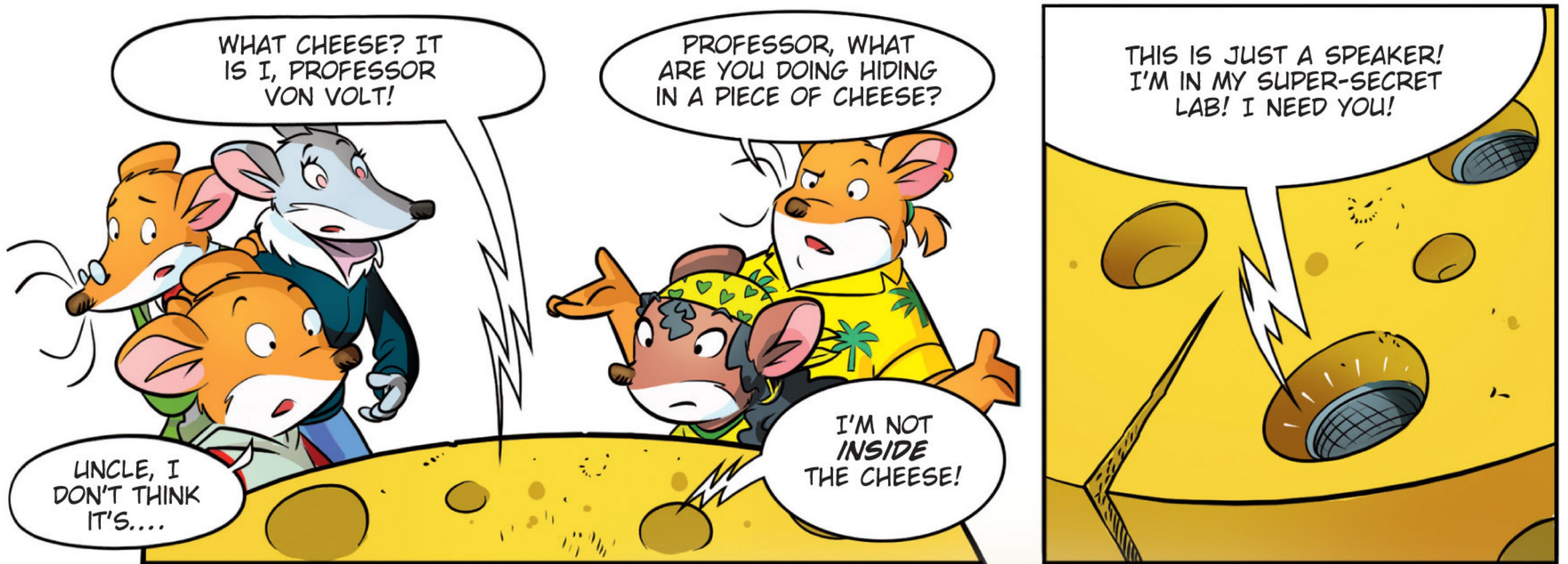


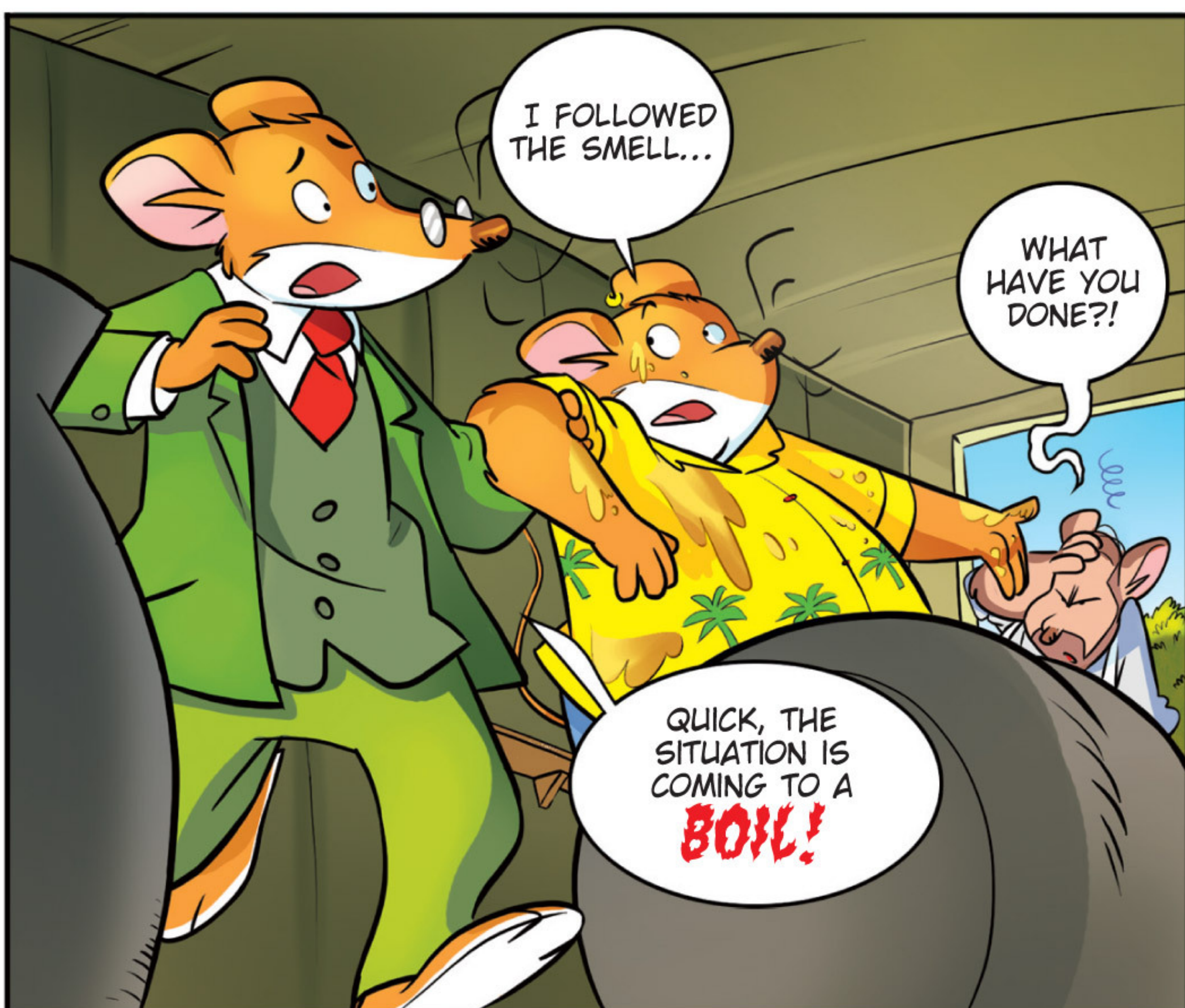
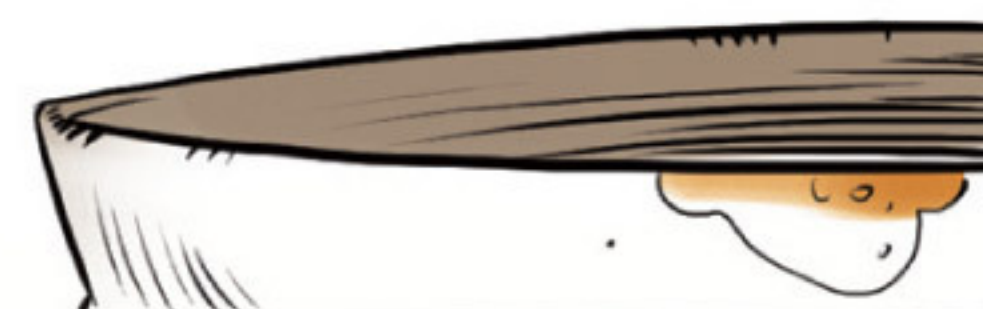


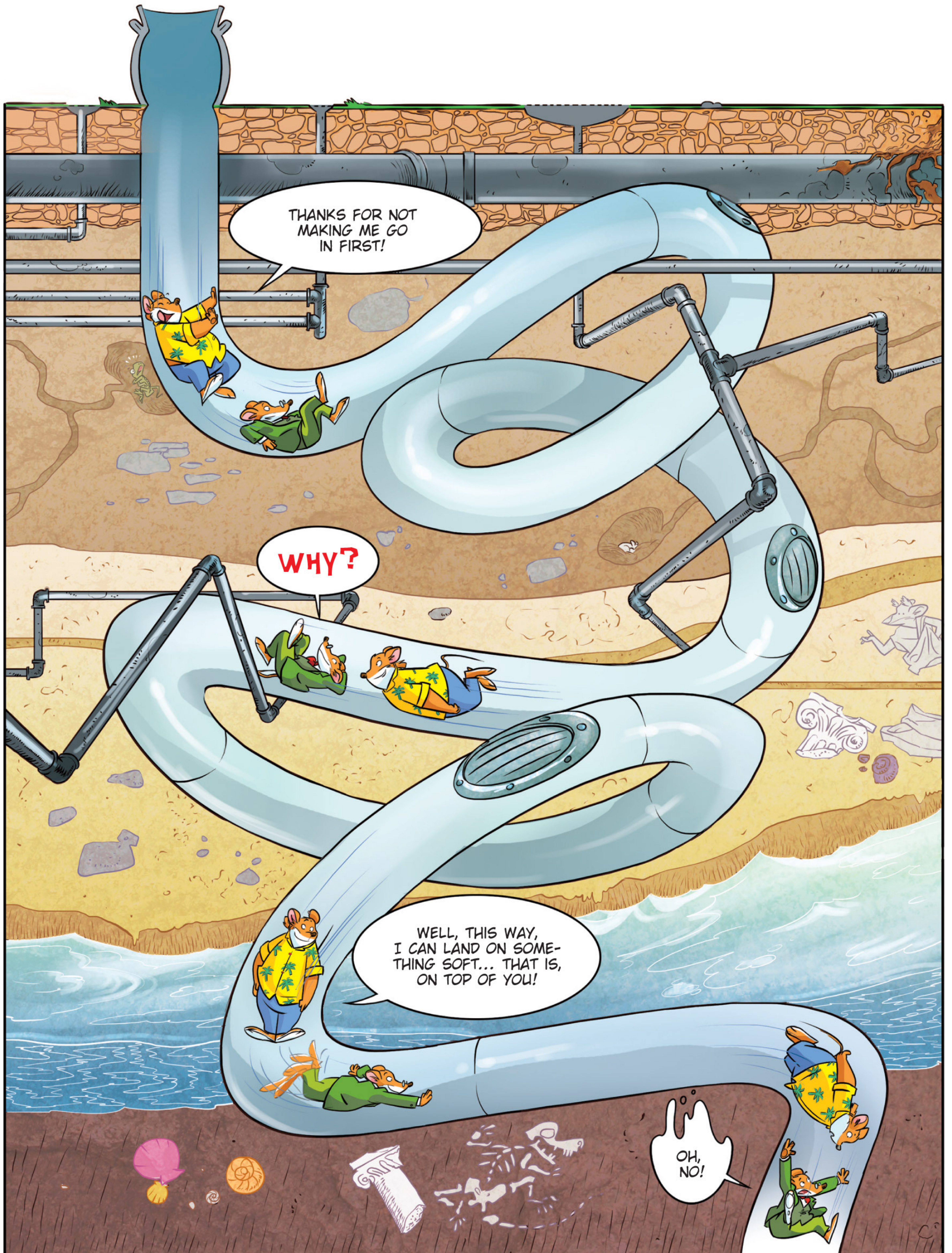


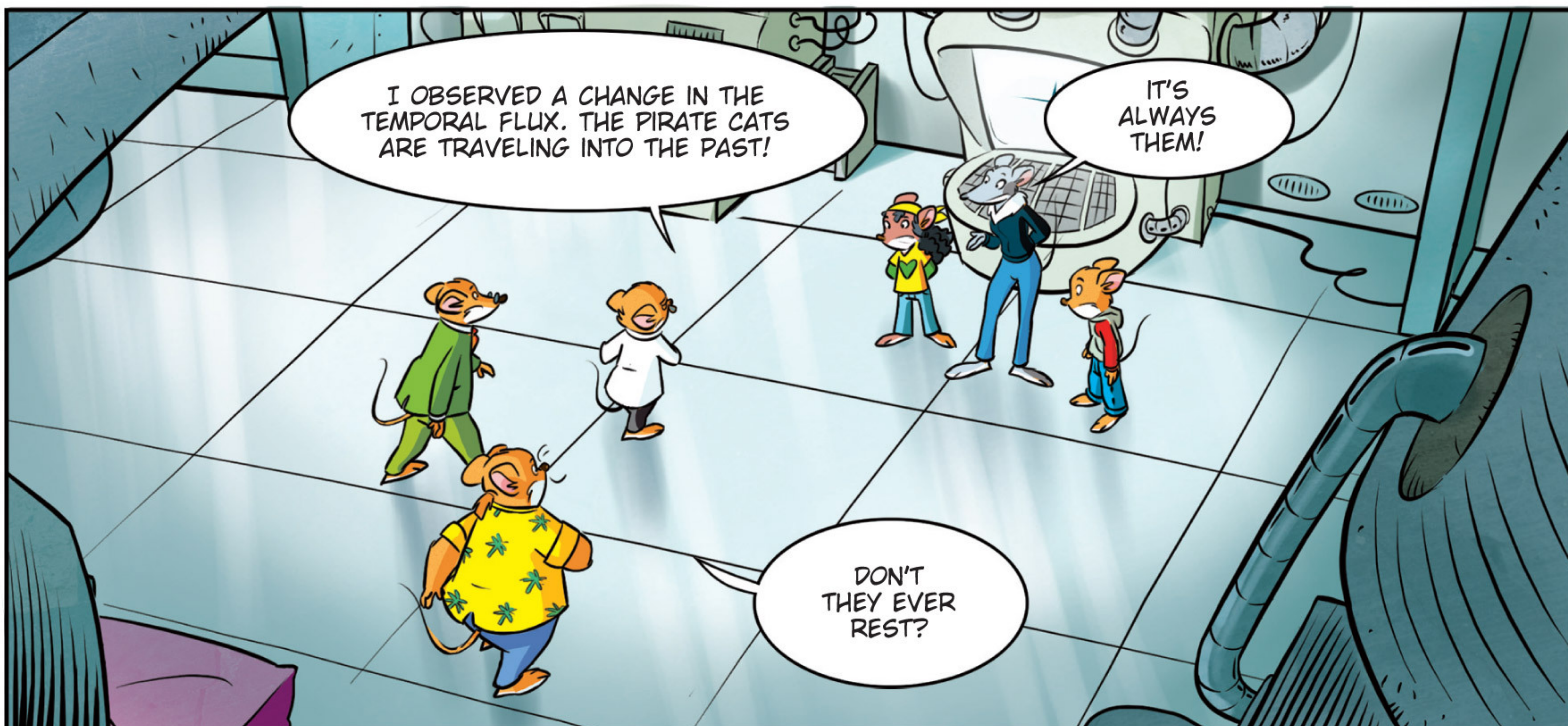
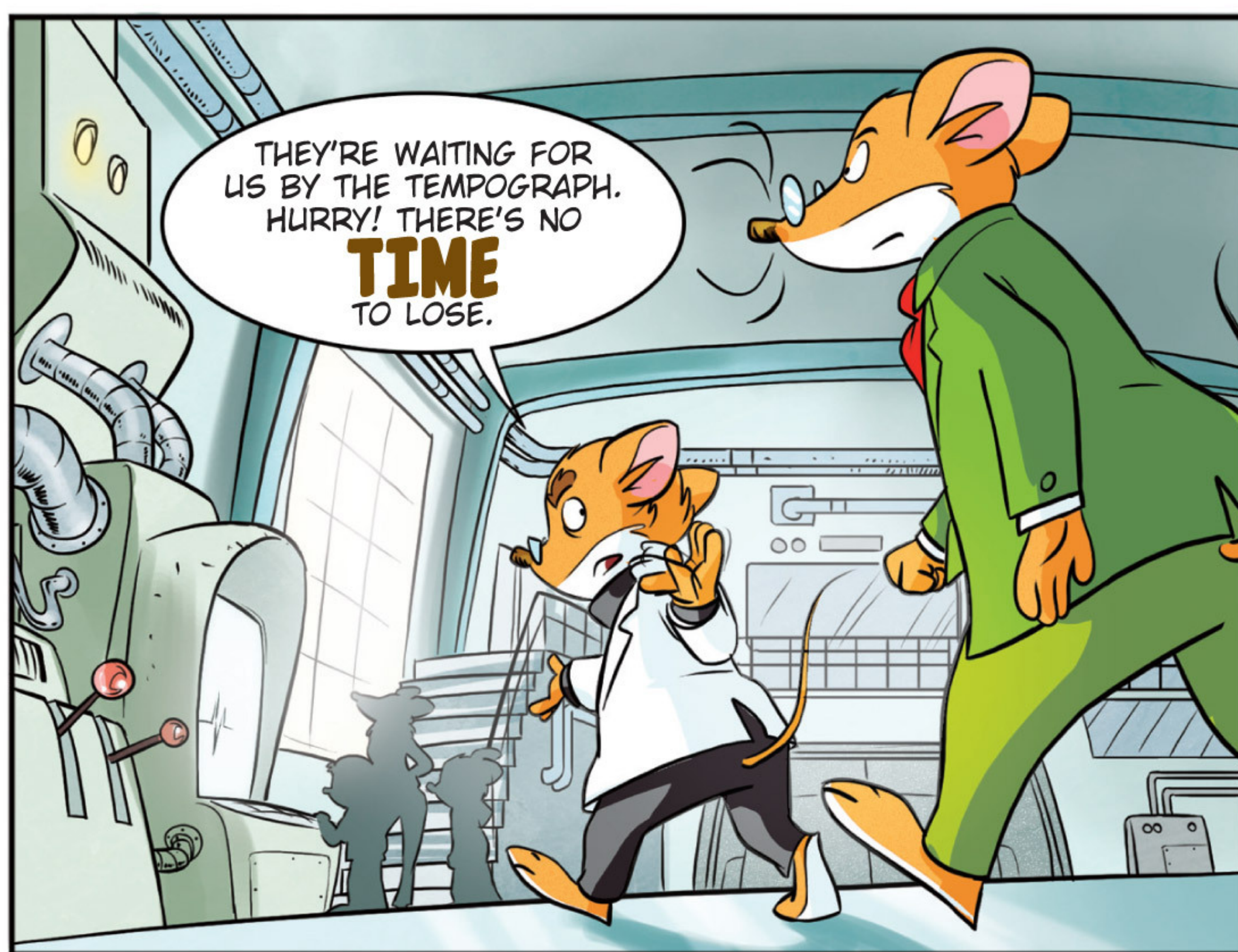
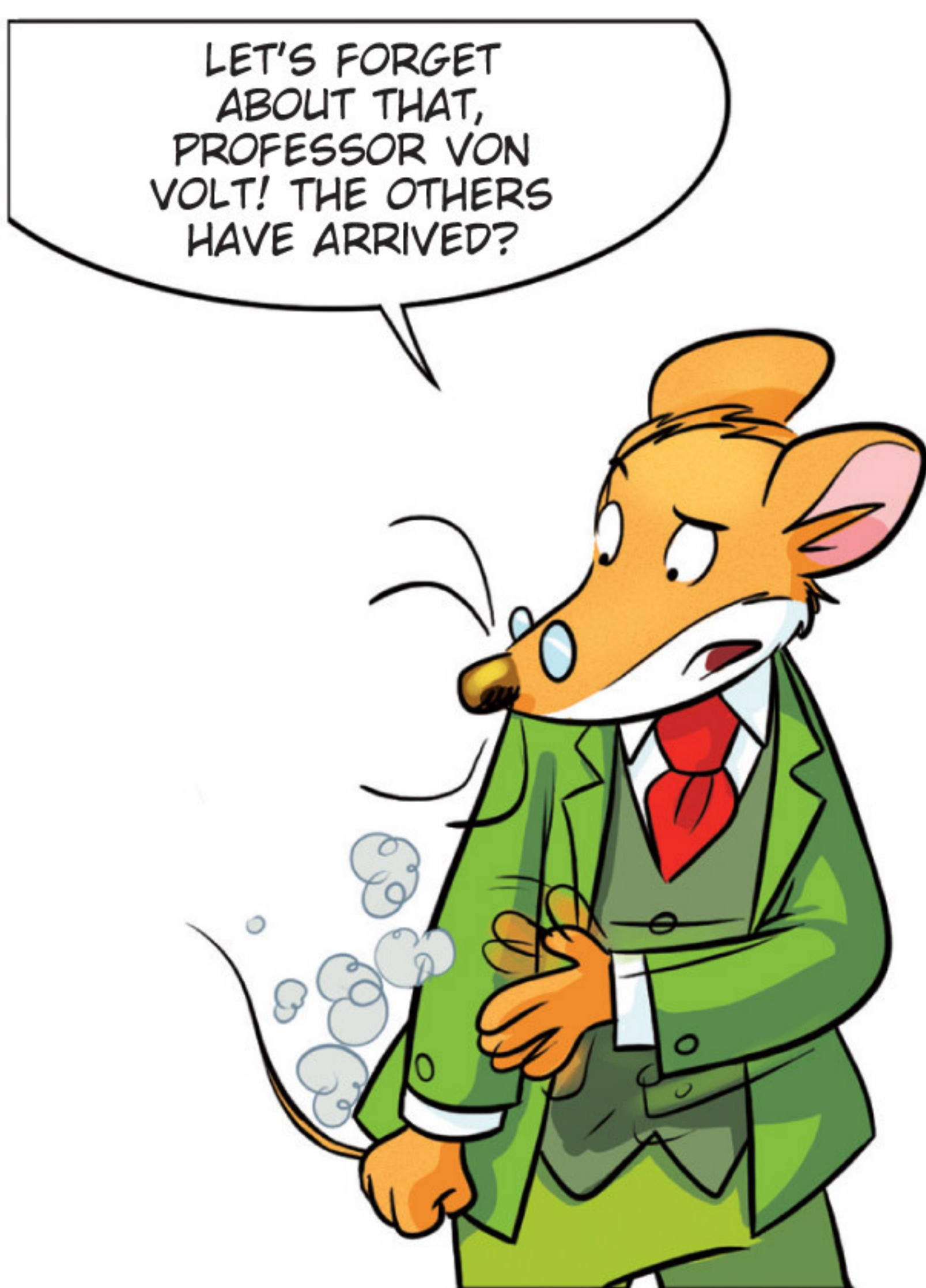


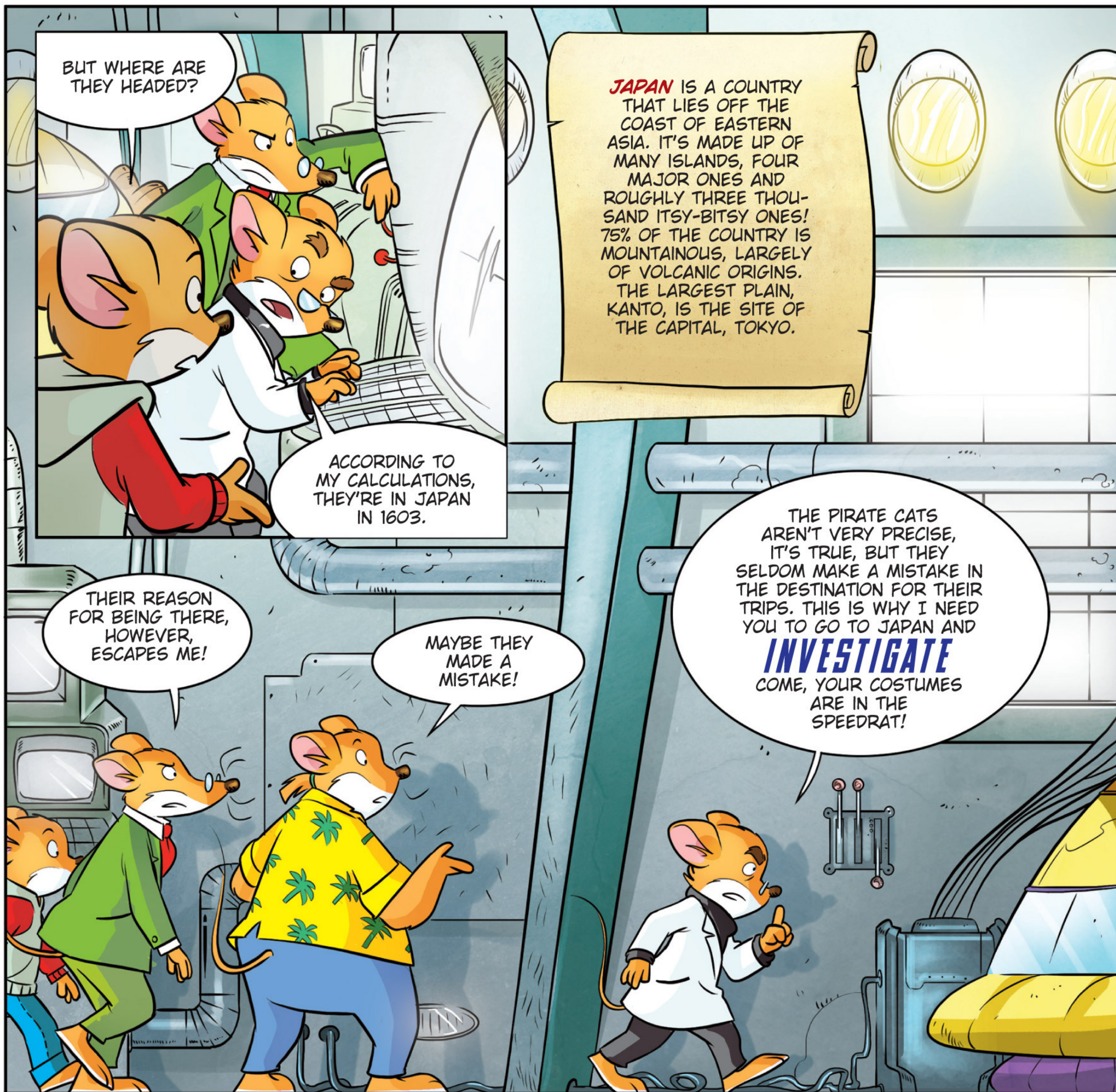












BUT WHERE ARE THEY HEADED?

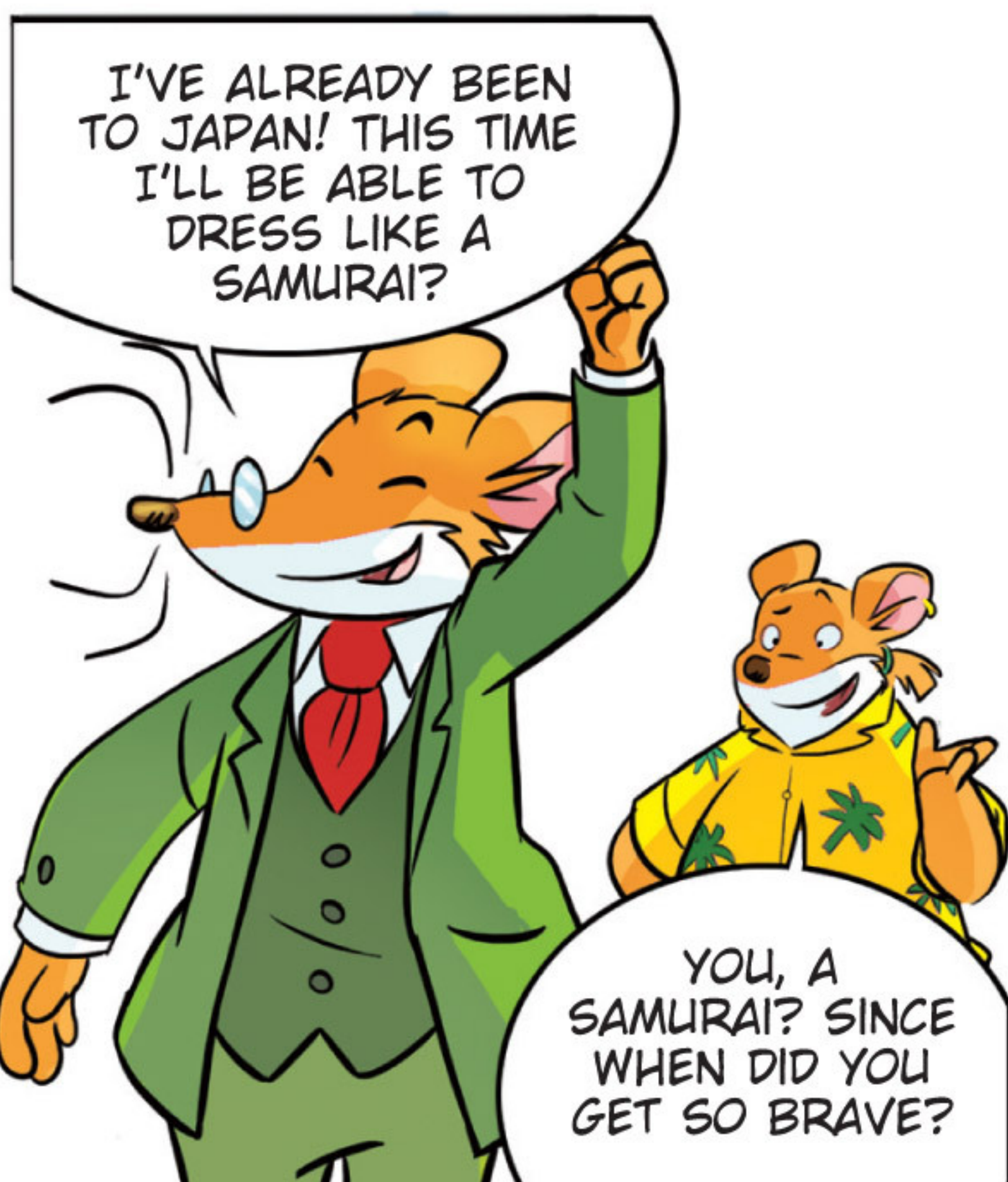
JAPAN IS A COUNTRY THAT LIES OFF THE COAST OF EASTERN ASIA. IT'S MADE UP OF MANY ISLANDS, FOUR MAJOR ONES AND ROUGHLY THREE THOUSAND ITSY-BITSY ONES! 75% OF THE COUNTRY IS MOUNTAINOUS, LARGELY OF VOLCANIC ORIGINS. THE LARGEST PLAIN, KANTO, IS THE SITE OF THE CAPITAL, TOKYO.

ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, THEY'RE IN JAPAN IN 1603.

THEIR REASON FOR BEING THERE, HOWEVER, ESCAPES ME!

MAYBE THEY MADE A MISTAKE!

THE PIRATE CATS AREN'T VERY PRECISE, IT'S TRUE, BUT THEY SELDOM MAKE A MISTAKE IN THE DESTINATION FOR THEIR TRIPS. THIS IS WHY I NEED YOU TO GO TO JAPAN AND **INVESTIGATE** COME, YOUR COSTUMES ARE IN THE SPEEDRAT!

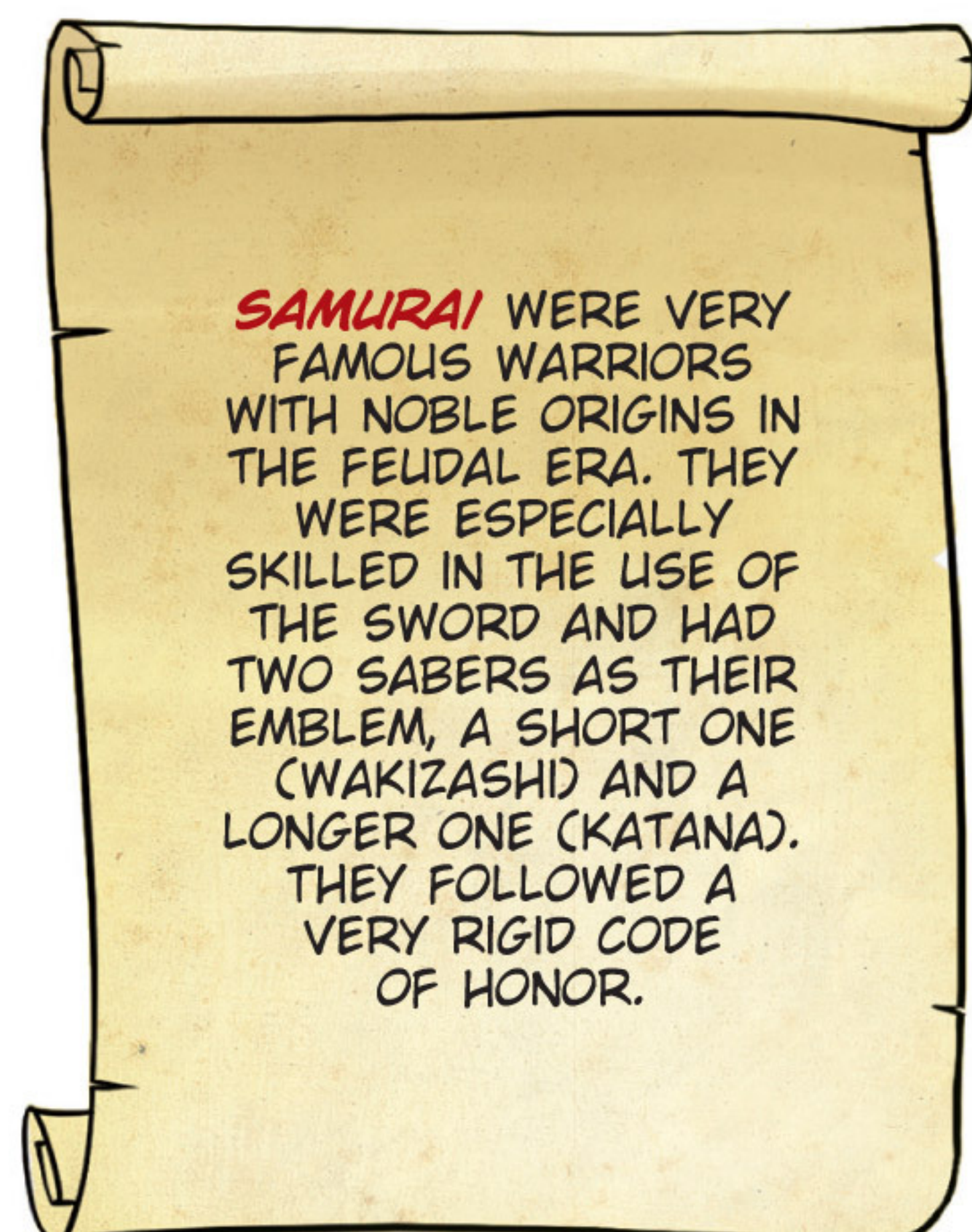


I'VE ALREADY BEEN TO JAPAN! THIS TIME I'LL BE ABLE TO DRESS LIKE A SAMURAI?

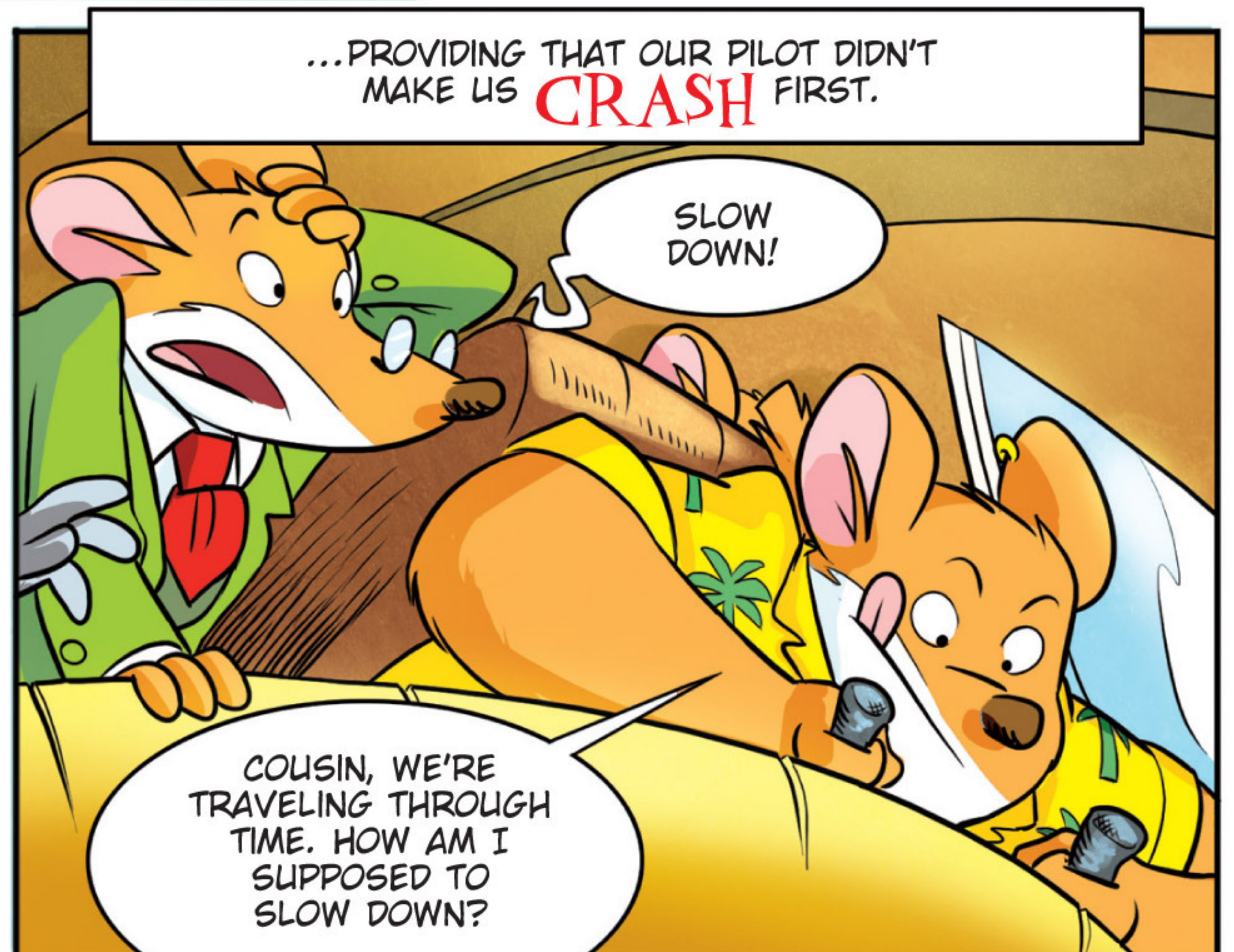
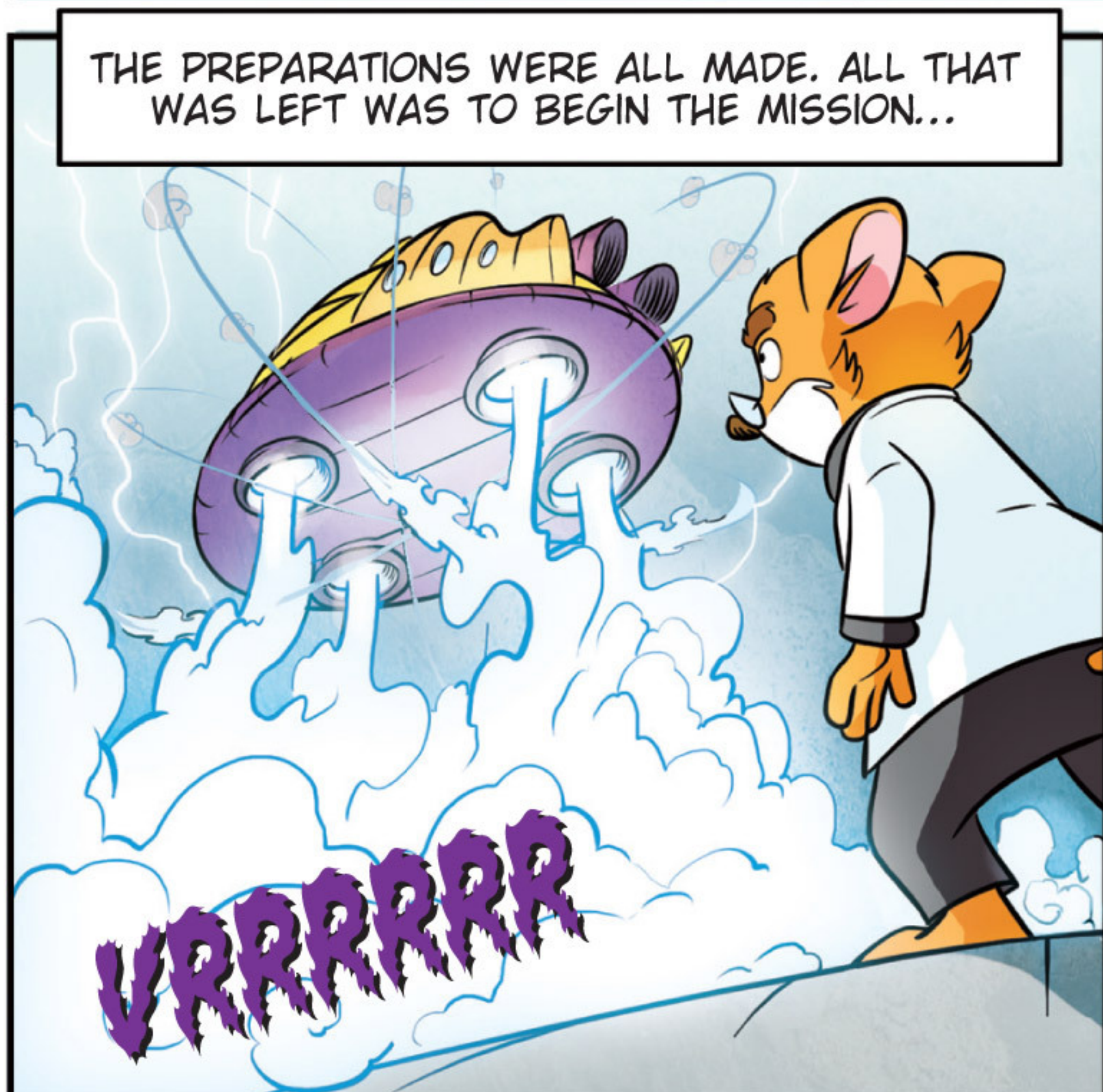
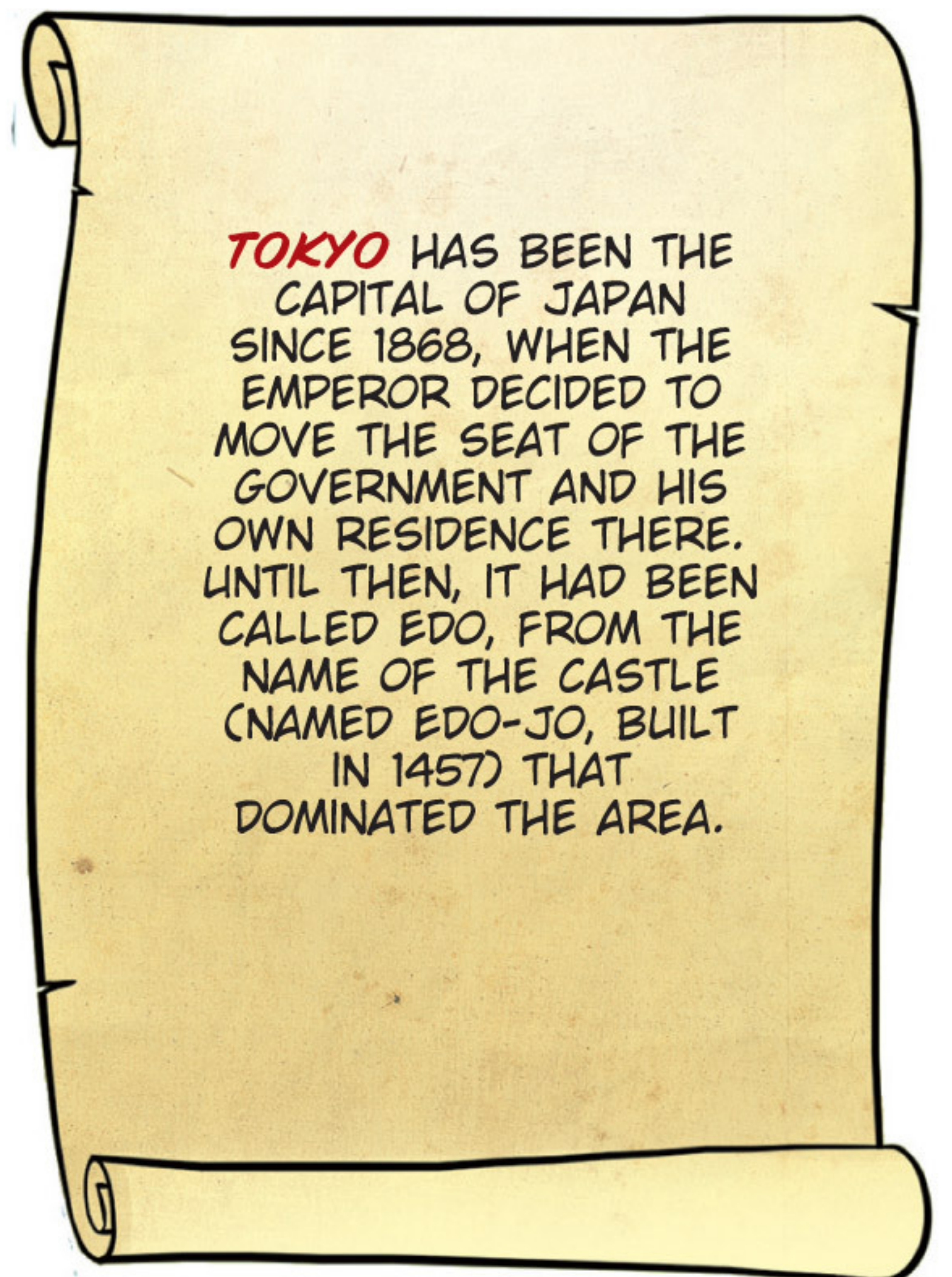
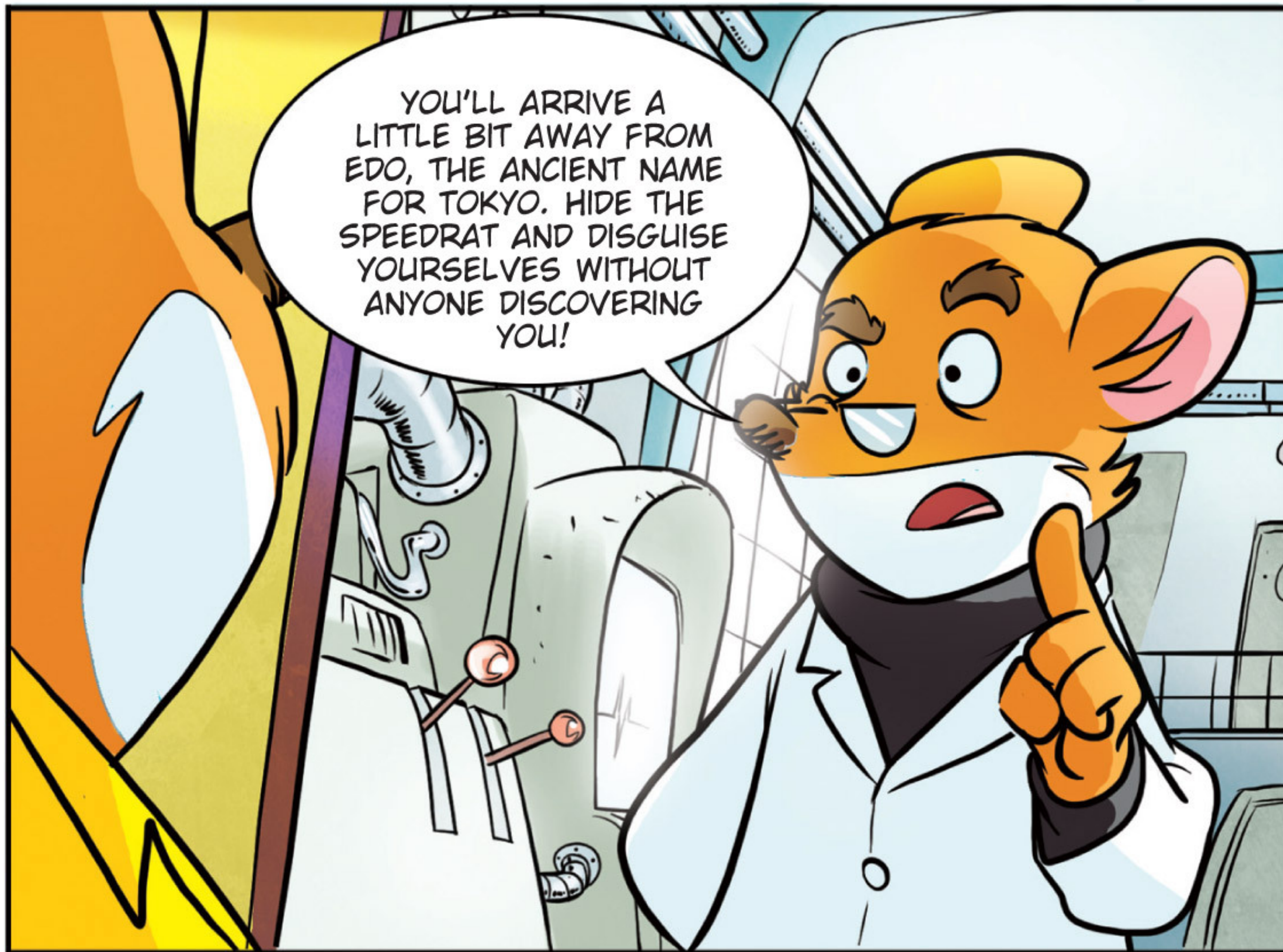
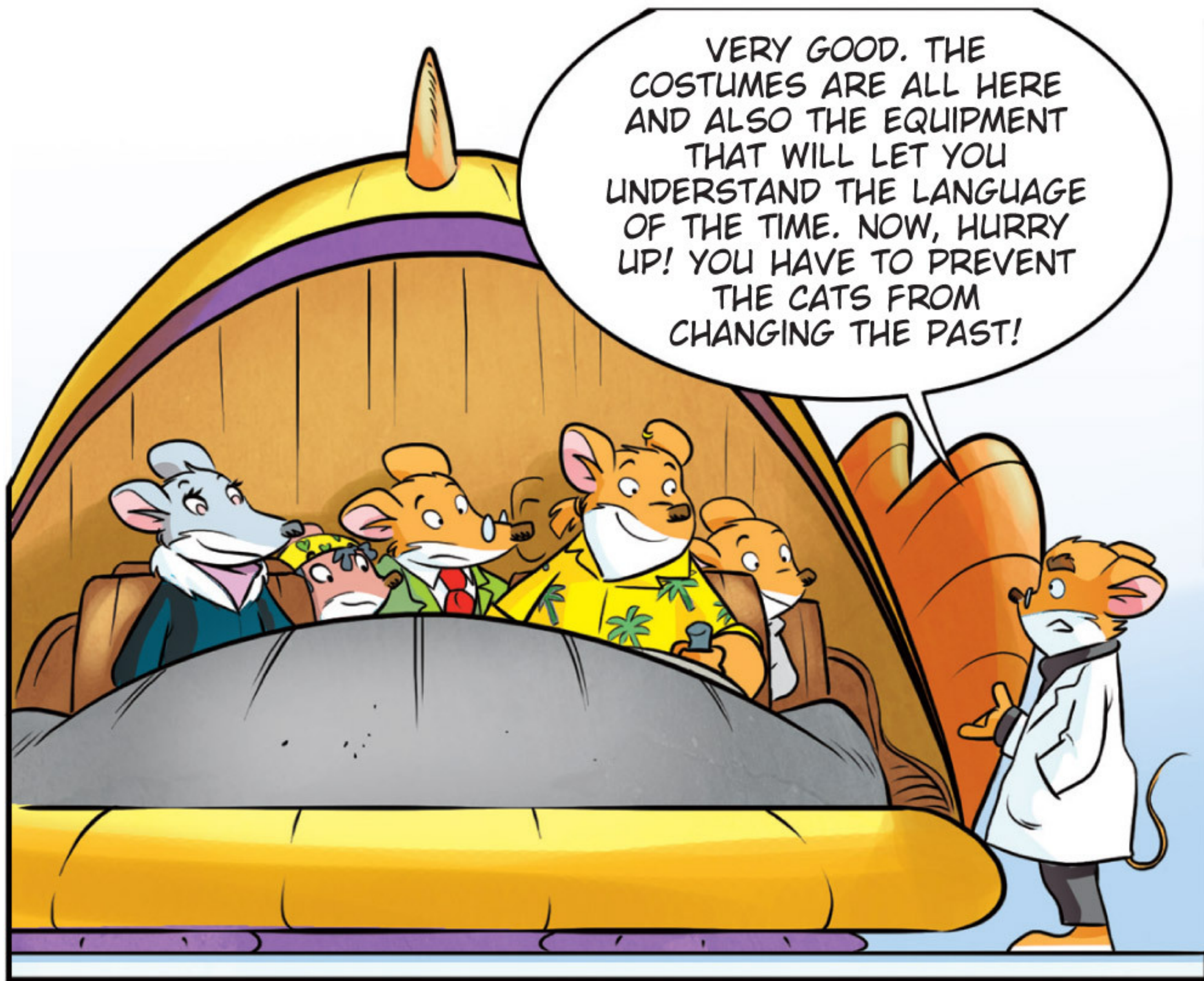
YOU, A SAMURAI? SINCE WHEN DID YOU GET SO BRAVE?



ACTUALLY... I THOUGHT OF SOMETHING SIMPLER. GERONIMO, TRAP, AND BENJAMIN WILL BE STREET PERFORMERS, ACCOMPANIED BY THEA AND BUGSY WUGSY.



SAMURAI WERE VERY FAMOUS WARRIORS WITH NOBLE ORIGINS IN THE FEUDAL ERA. THEY WERE ESPECIALLY SKILLED IN THE USE OF THE SWORD AND HAD TWO SABERS AS THEIR EMBLEM, A SHORT ONE (WAKIZASHI) AND A LONGER ONE (KATANA). THEY FOLLOWED A VERY RIGID CODE OF HONOR.



IN THE MEANTIME, CATARDONE III, EMPEROR OF THE PIRATE CATS, HIS DAUGHTER TERSILLA, AND THEIR ASSISTANT, BONZO, HAD ARRIVED IN JAPAN, IN 1603. THEY'D MADE MISTAKES, HOWEVER, IN A FEW OF THEIR CALCULATIONS...

MOUNT FUJI MT. FUJI IS A VOLCANO AND THE TALLEST MOUNTAIN IN JAPAN (3,776 METERS). ITS SNOWY PEAK IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS SYMBOLS OF THE COUNTRY. THE JAPANESE CONSIDER IT HOLY AND MAKE A PILGRIMAGE TO ITS SLOPES AT LEAST ONCE DURING THEIR LIVES.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NEAR MT. FUJI?

YOU TOLD ME WE HAD TO GO TO **JAPAN**, AND THIS IS JAPAN, RIGHT?

MT. FUJI'S FAR FROM EDO. HOW DO YOU THINK WE'RE GOING TO GET THERE?

LMMM...



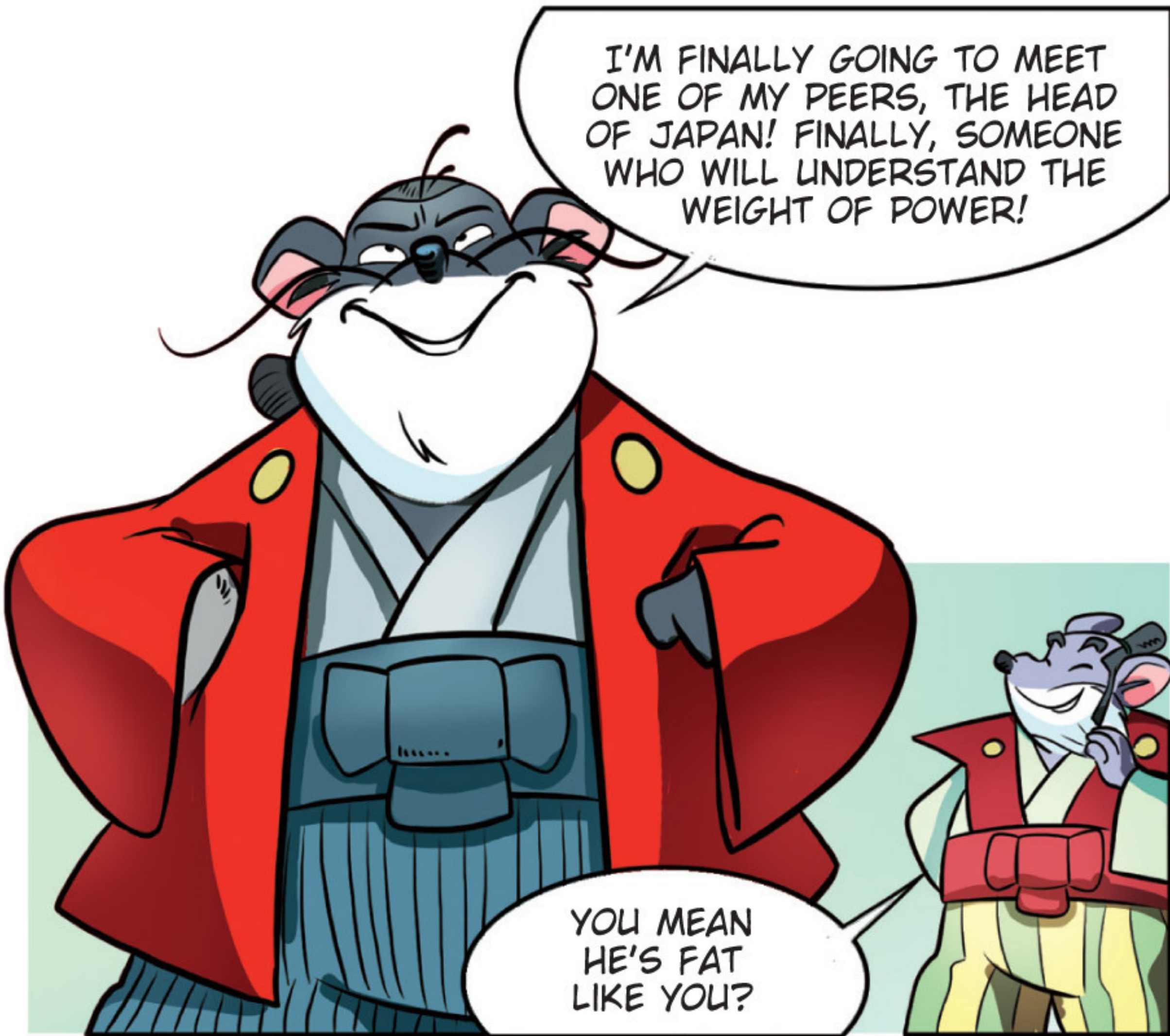
WE'LL FIND A WAY TO GET AROUND AND WE'RE NOT IN A HURRY. NO ONE KNOWS WE'RE HERE AND OUR MOUSE MASKS ARE STILL WORKING!



I STILL DON'T GET WHAT WE'RE DOING IN JAPAN IN 1603... IT'S COUNTRY-SIDE ALL AROUND HERE!

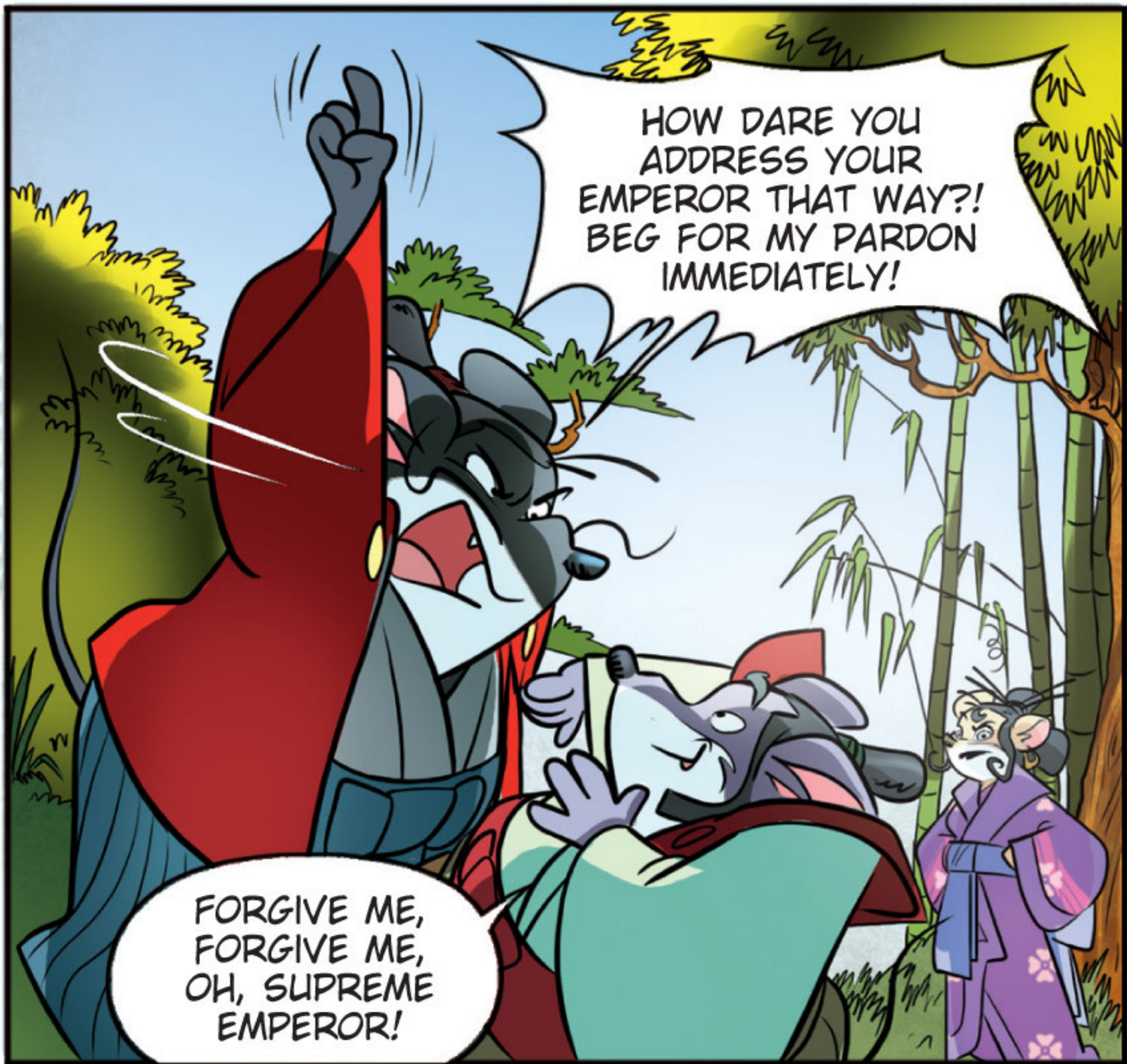
YOU'RE ALWAYS MOUSSING OFF,* AND THAT'S WHY YOU'LL ALWAYS BE AN ASSISTANT, WHILE MY FATHER IS EMPEROR OF THE PIRATE CATS!

*TALKING NONSENSE!



I'M FINALLY GOING TO MEET ONE OF MY PEERS, THE HEAD OF JAPAN! FINALLY, SOMEONE WHO WILL UNDERSTAND THE WEIGHT OF POWER!

YOU MEAN HE'S FAT LIKE YOU?



HOW DARE YOU ADDRESS YOUR EMPEROR THAT WAY?! BEG FOR MY PARDON IMMEDIATELY!

FORGIVE ME, FORGIVE ME, OH, SUPREME EMPEROR!



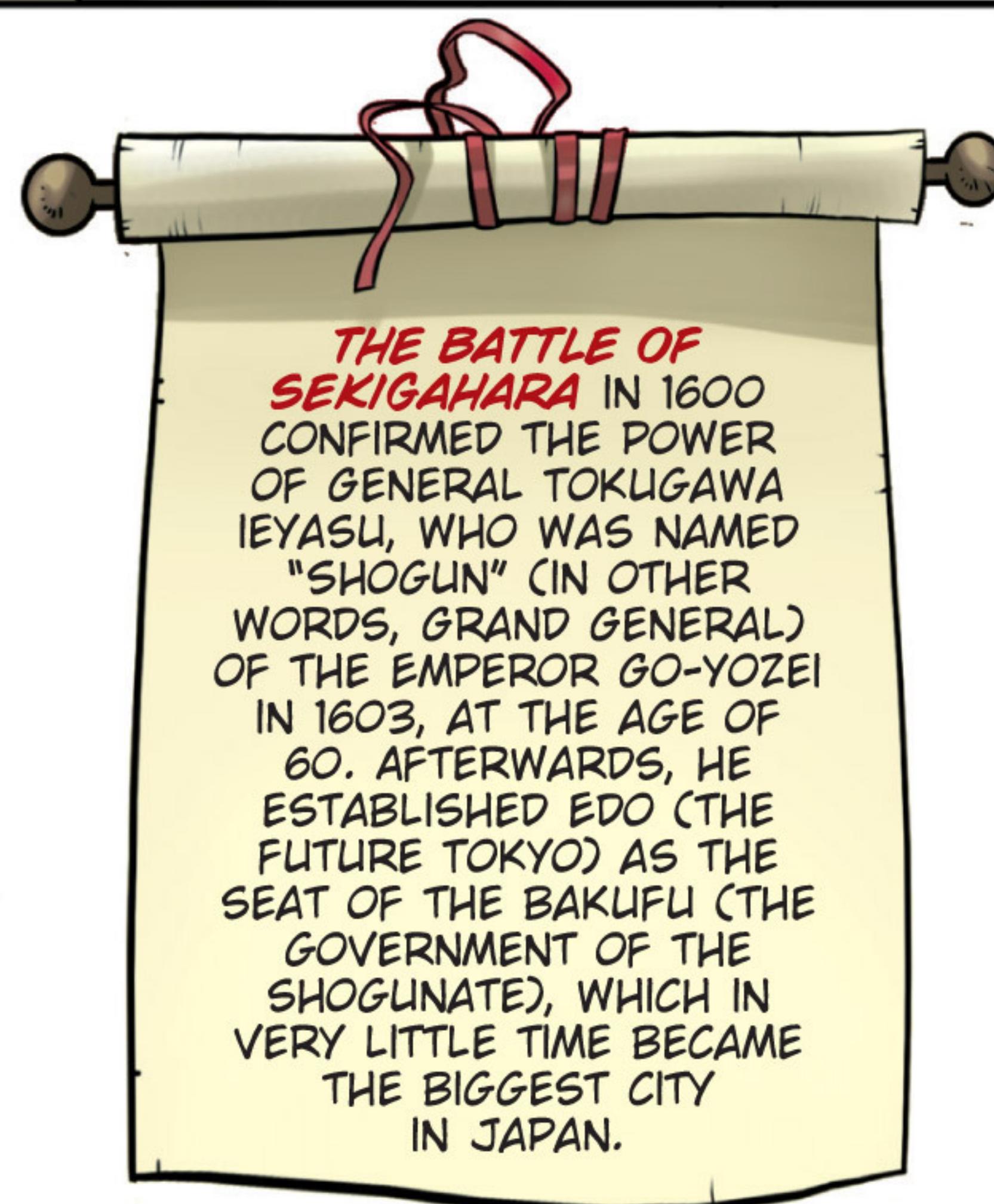
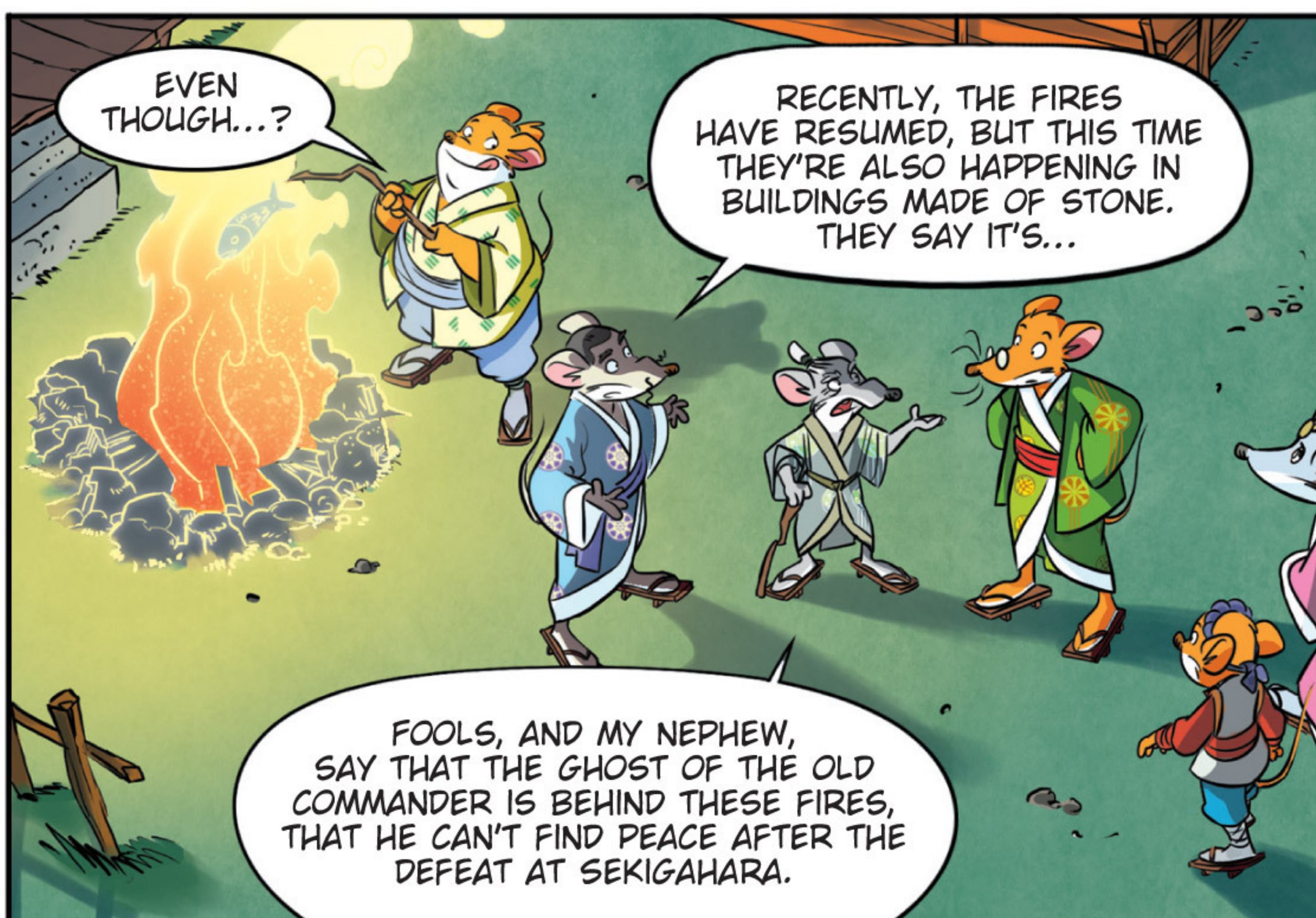
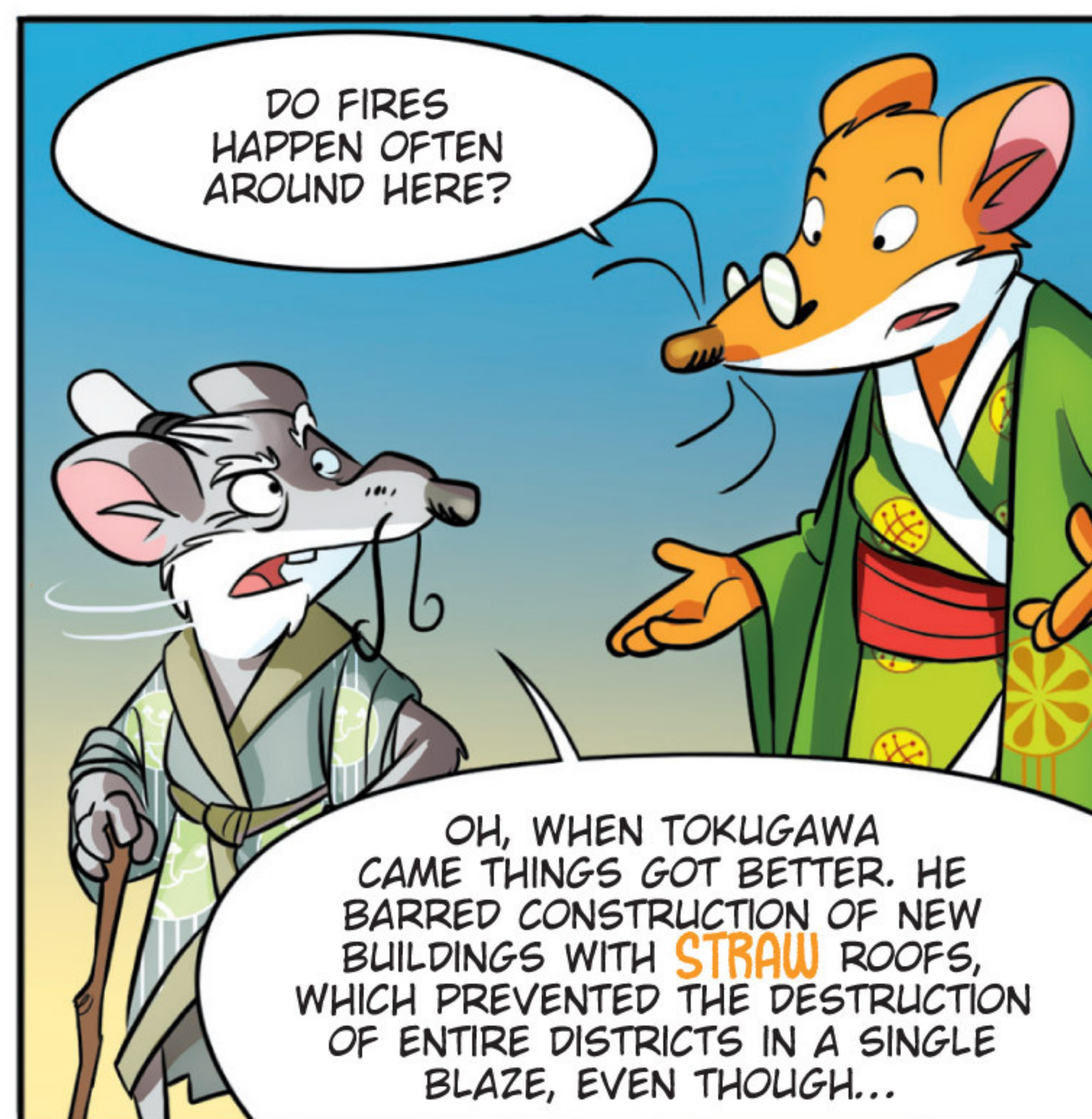
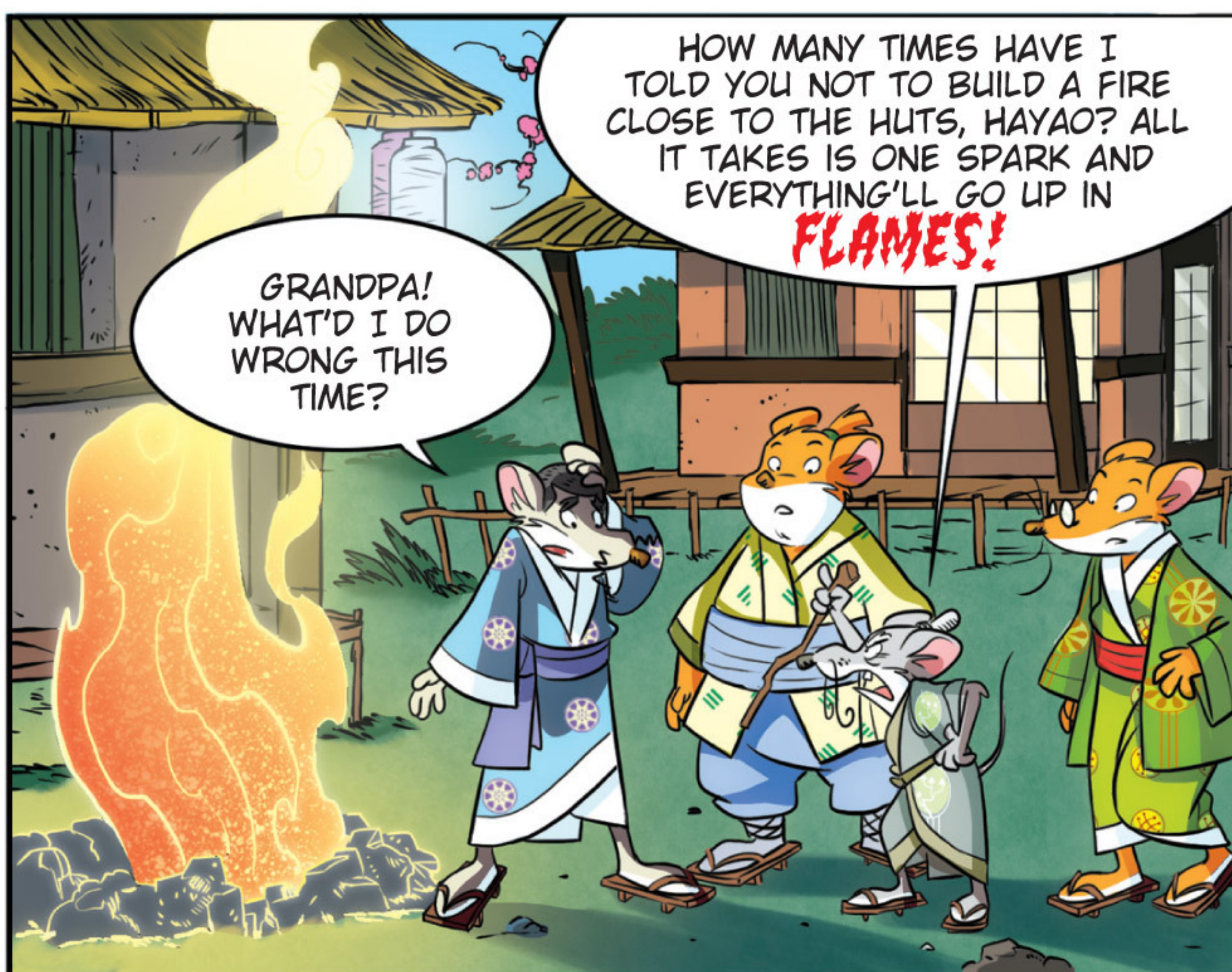
LET'S GO, WITHOUT LOSING ANY MORE TIME! EDO'S STILL FAR AWAY.

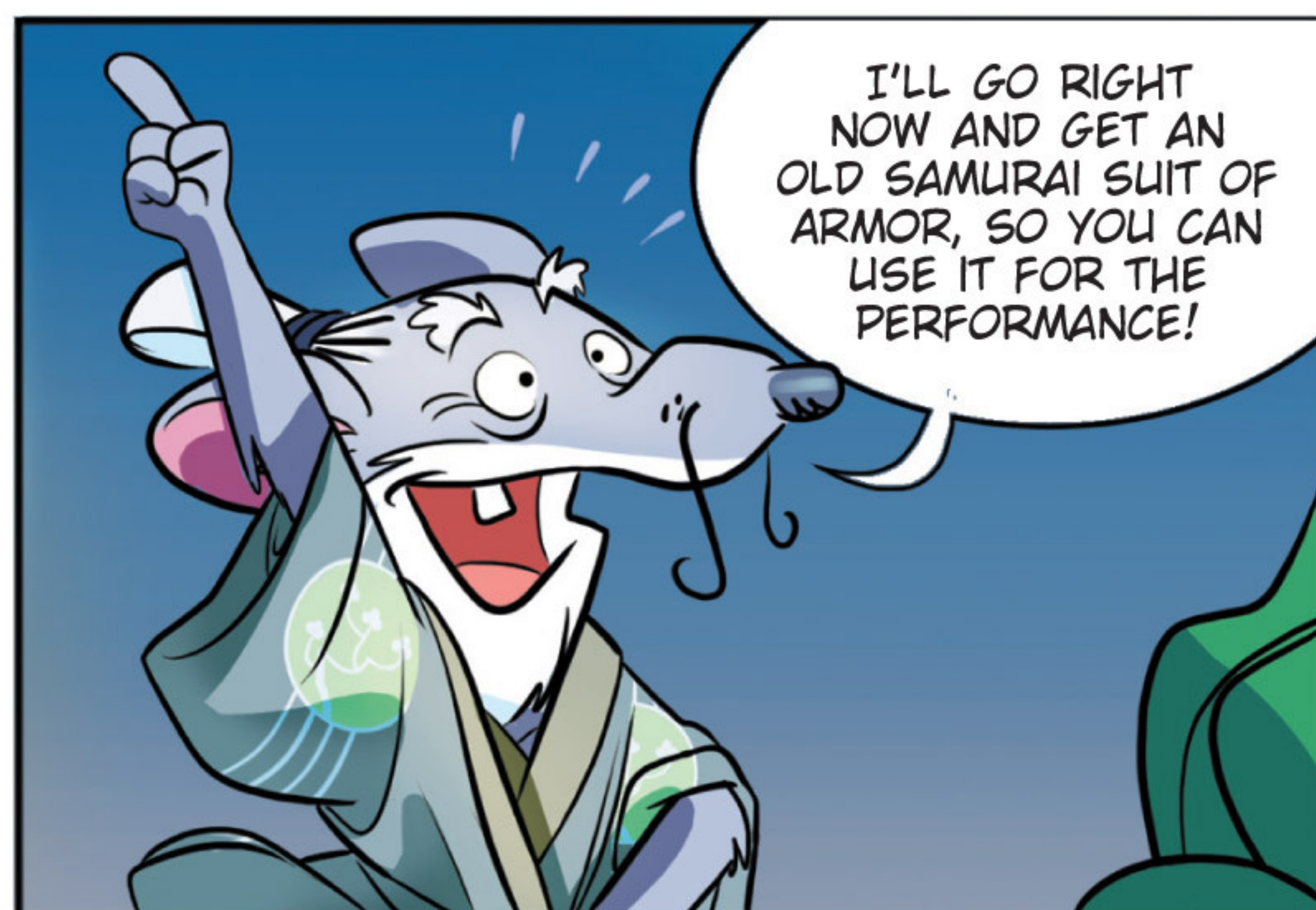
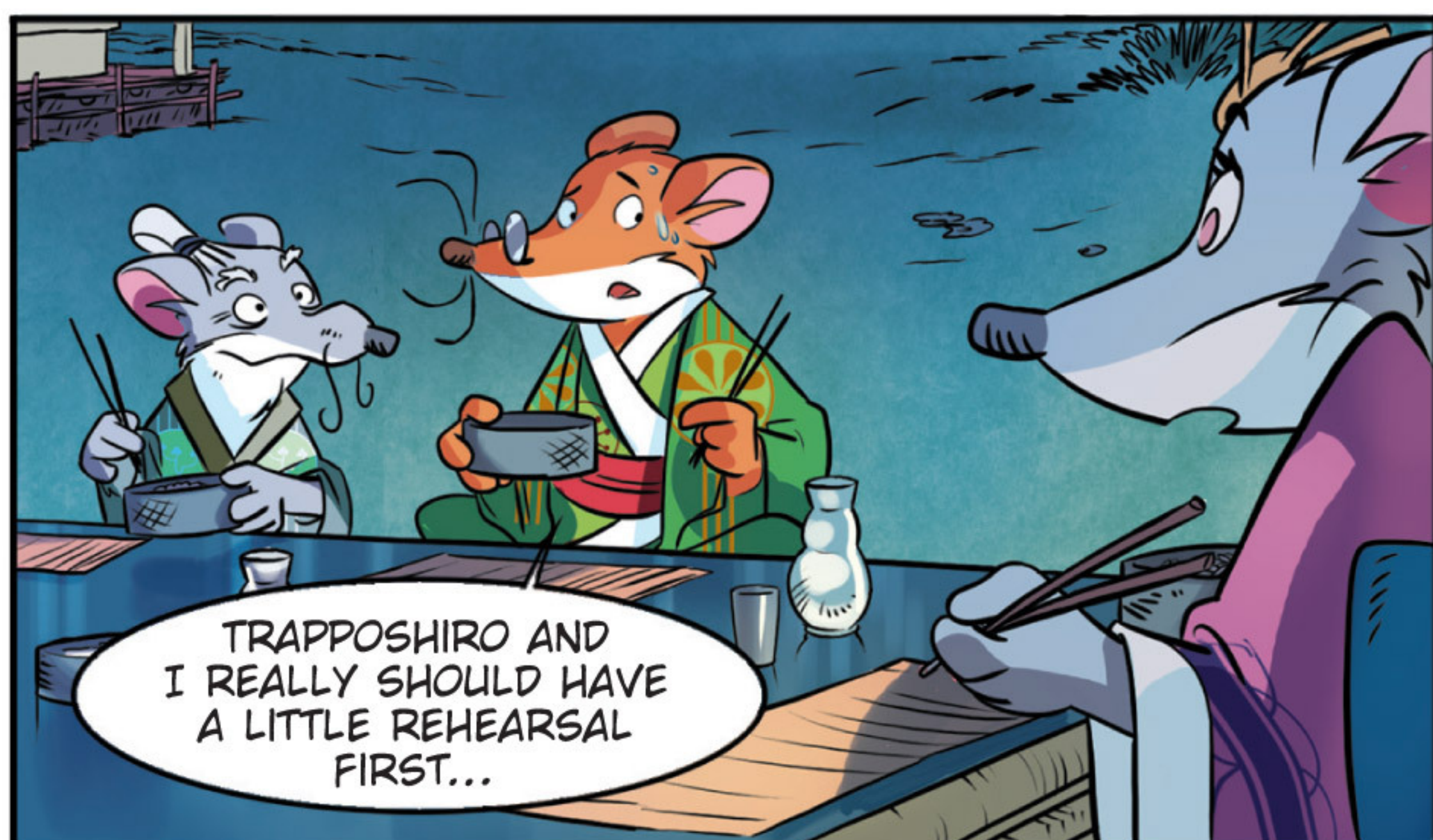
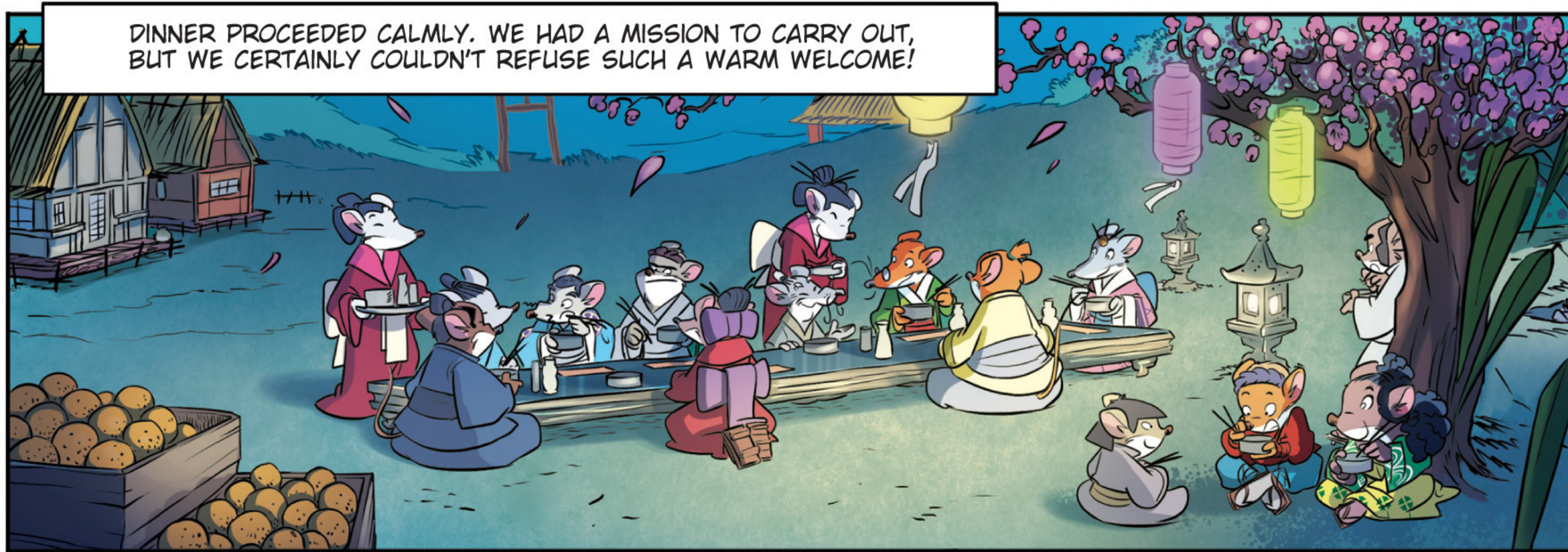
WAIT FOR US: YOU'VE GOT THE **MAP!**

IN THE MEANTIME, WE'D ARRIVED NEAR EDO, HIDDEN THE SPEEDRAT AND PUT ON OUR COSTUMES.



ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE
IN OLD JAPAN, THE
SIMPLEST BUILDINGS WERE
BUILT OUT OF INEXPENSIVE
MATERIALS LIKE WOOD AND
STRAW, AS THE COUNTRY
WAS FULL OF FORESTS.
MORE IMPORTANT
BUILDINGS WERE BUILT
OUT OF MORE DURABLE
MATERIALS, SUCH
AS STONE.





LATER...

UNCLE, ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS?

I'M A SCAREDY MOUSE, BUT WHAT ALTERNATIVE DO WE HAVE?



NO!
NO!
NO!
NO!

MAYBE THEY DON'T WANT GERONIMO TO SING?



NO, DEAR, THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT NOH THEATER.



NOH THEATER

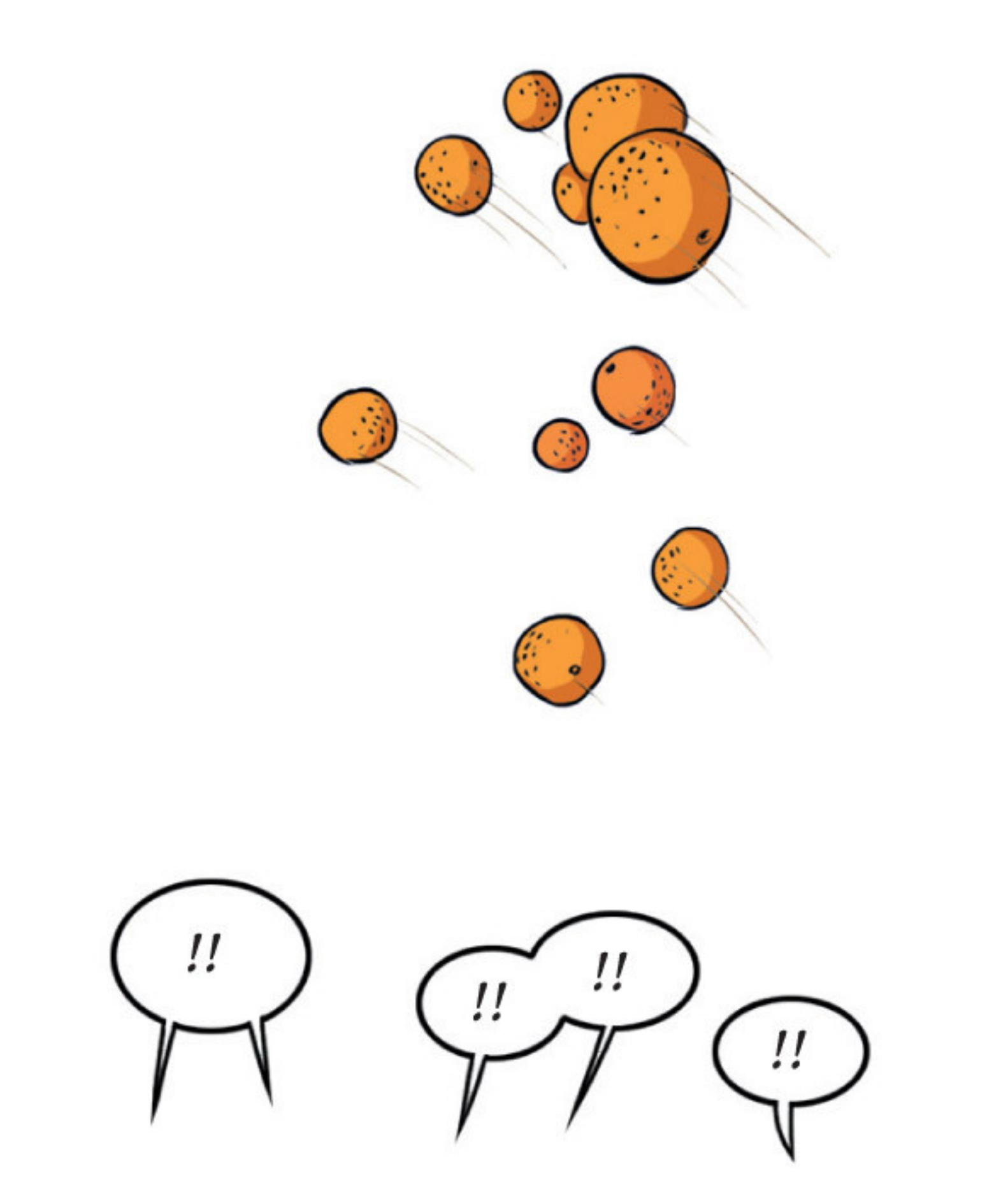
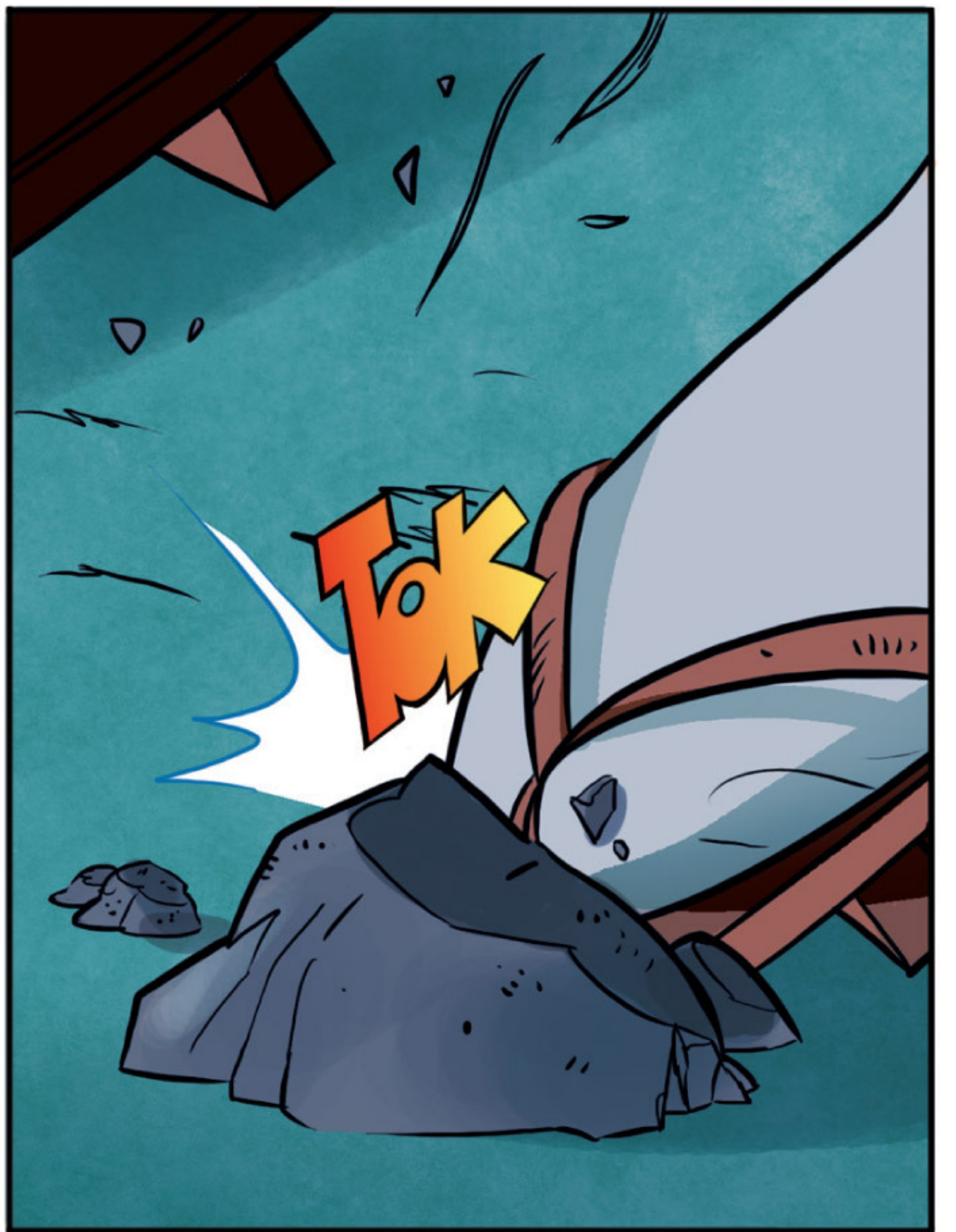
NOH DRAMA WAS A TYPE OF THEATER POPULAR IN 14TH CENTURY JAPAN, WHICH RETOLD STORIES OF HEROIC EVENTS FROM JAPANESE TRADITION THROUGH SONG, ACTING, AND DANCE. THE ACTORS WERE ALL MEN, EVEN IN WOMEN'S ROLES, AND THEY WORE DISTINCTIVE MASKS.

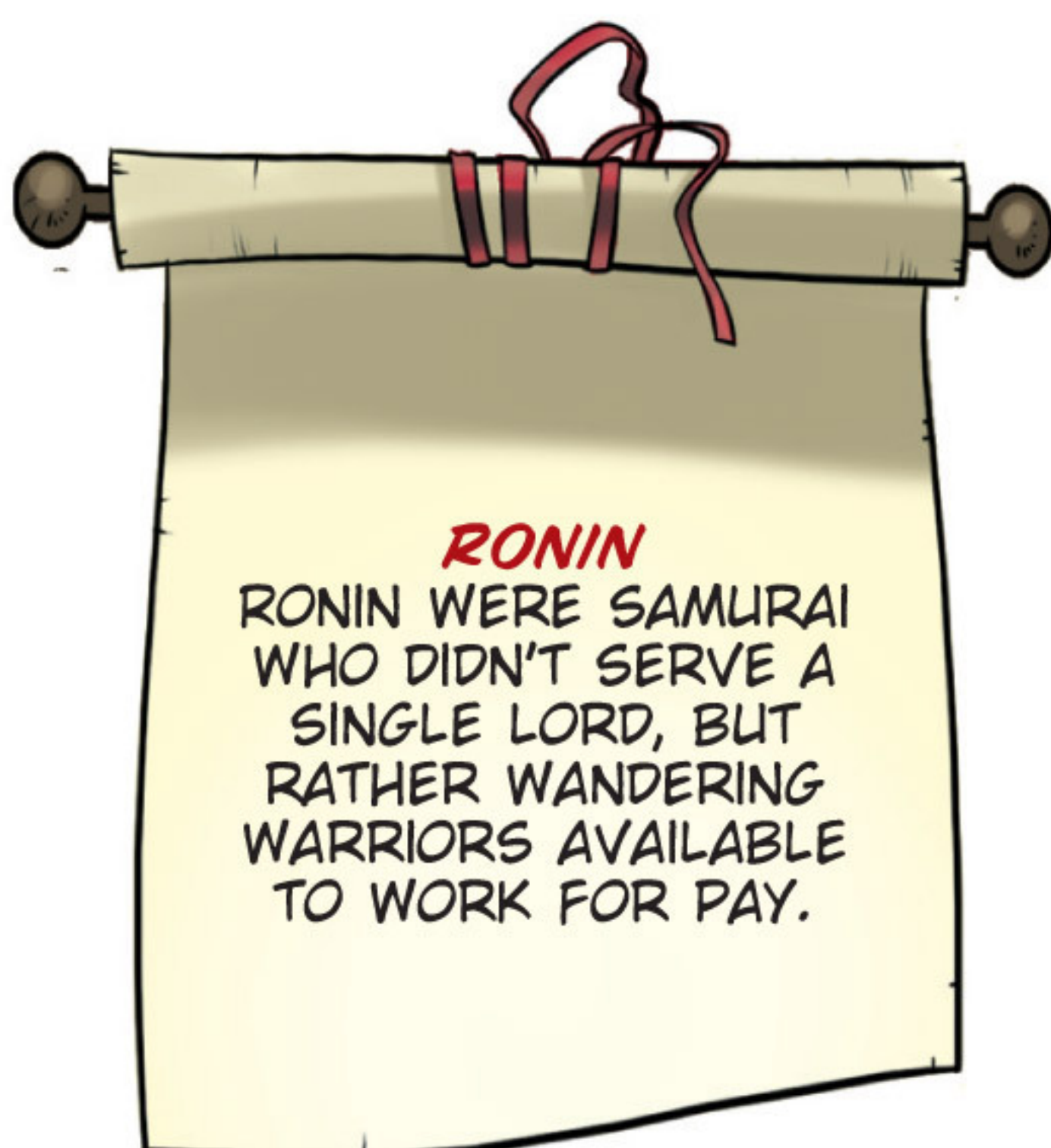
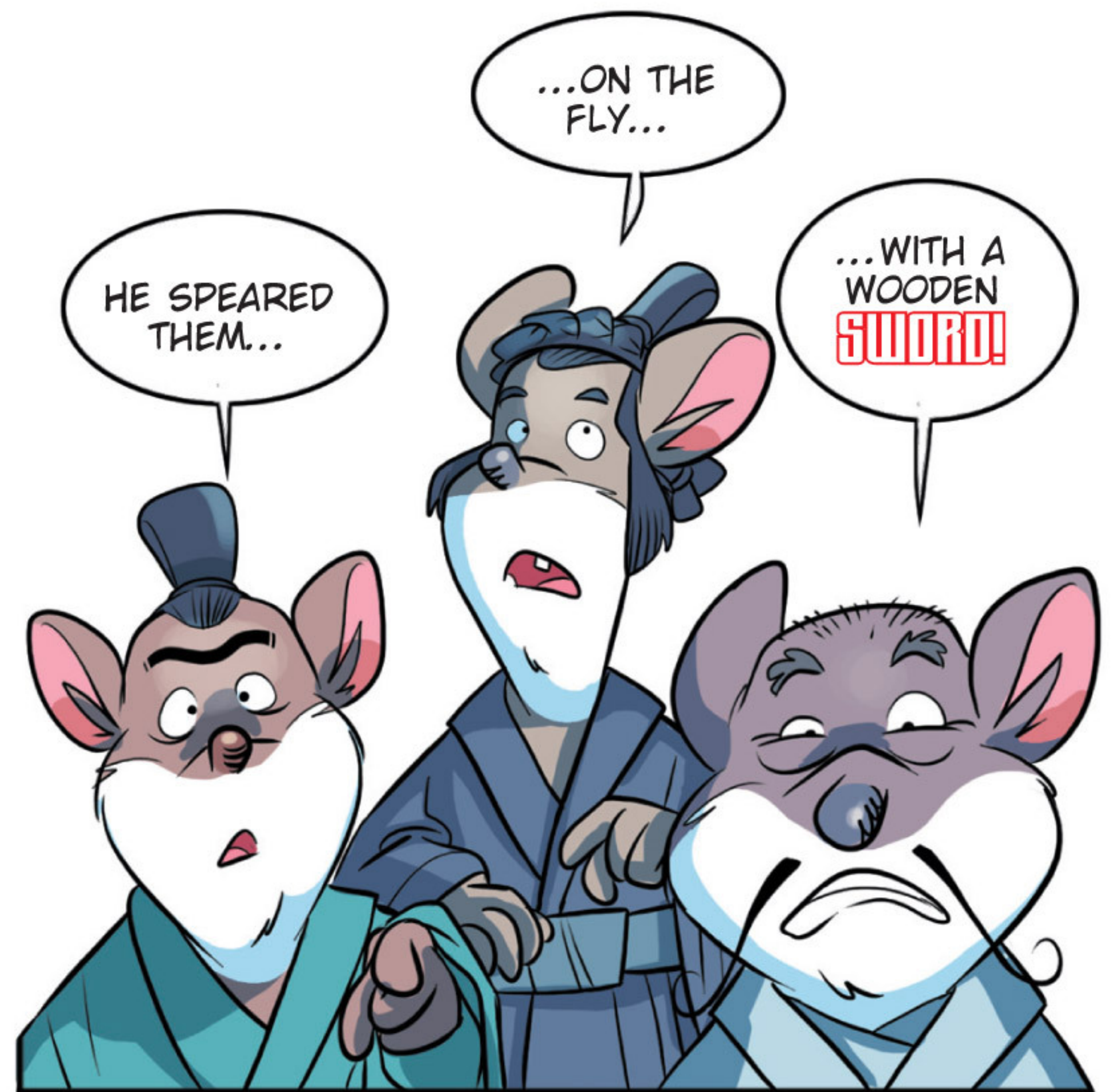
ALLOW ME TO PERFORM A DANCE BEFORE MY BROTHERS BEGIN THEIR PLAY...

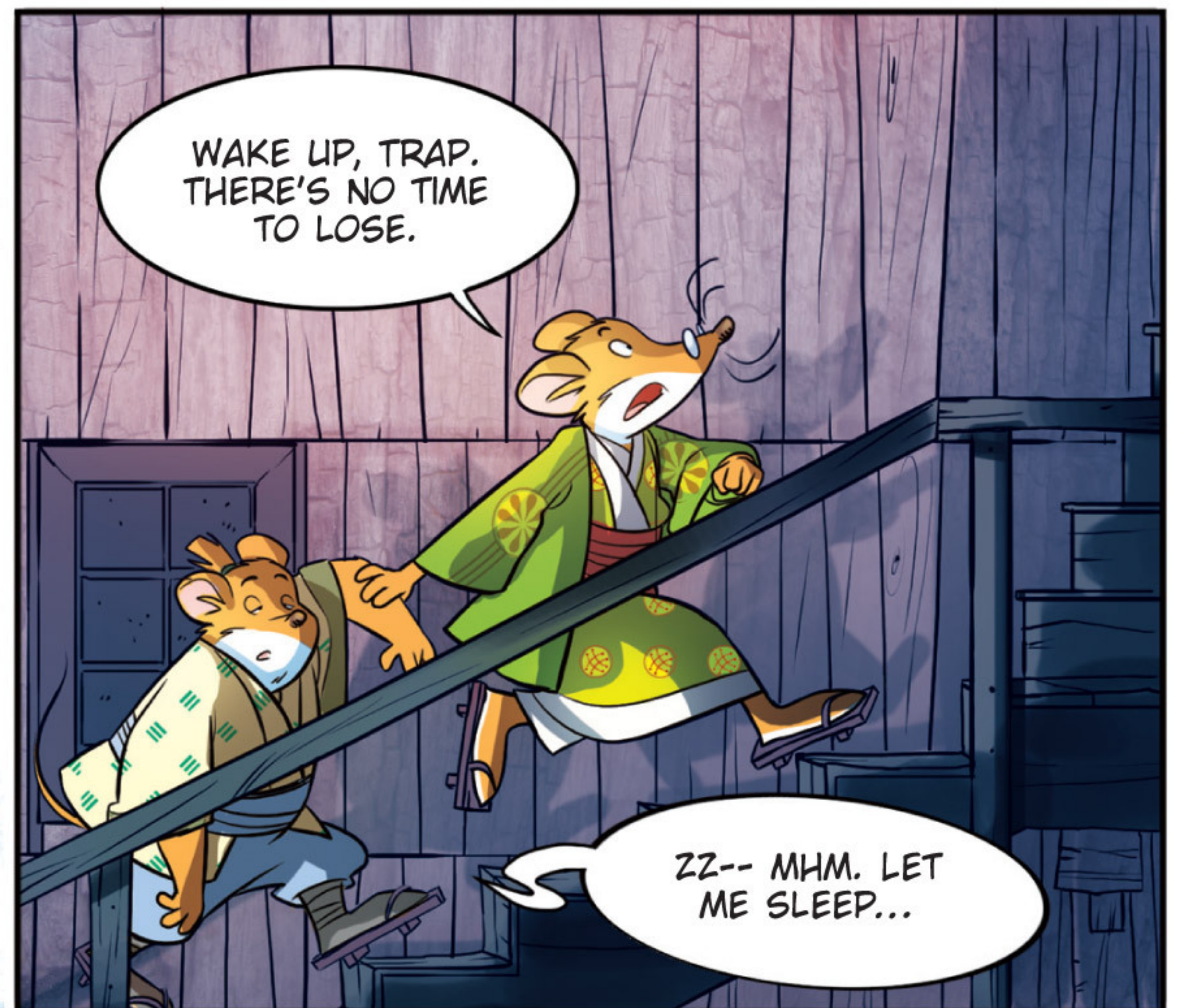
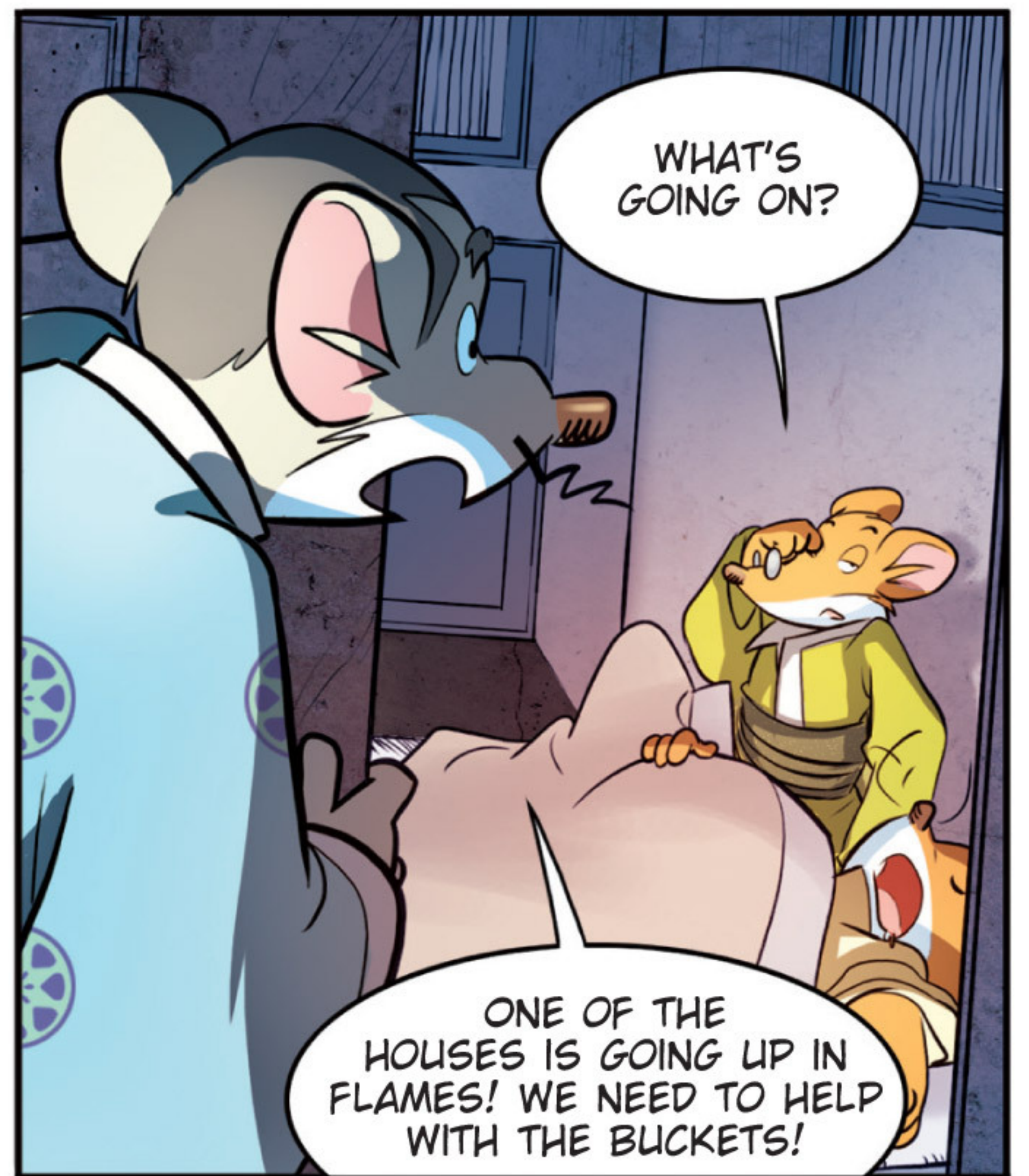


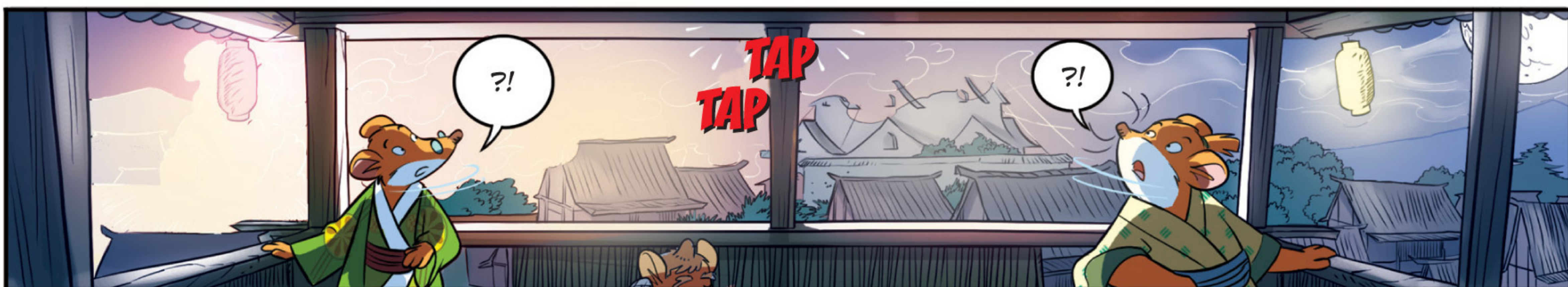
A WOMAN WHO ACTS? WHAT KIND OF **STRANGENESS** IS THIS?















IN THE MEANTIME, MY FAME AS AN ACTOR
HAD SPREAD TO THE FOUR WINDS AND
I HAD BEEN INVITED TO COURT.

WHAT'RE ALL
THESE COMINGS
AND GOINGS?

THE EDO-JO
CASTLE ISN'T YET
FINISHED. THE WING FOR
SHOGUN TOKUGAWA
IEYASU IS READY, BUT
THERE'S STILL
MUCH TO DO.

SO WHY
DOES THE
EMPEROR WANT
TO SEE US?

NO, NO, TOKUGAWA IYASU ISN'T
THE EMPEROR. HE'S THE SHOGUN!
THAT'S A VERY POWERFUL FAMILY
WHO GOVERNS THIS REGION.

SHOGUN

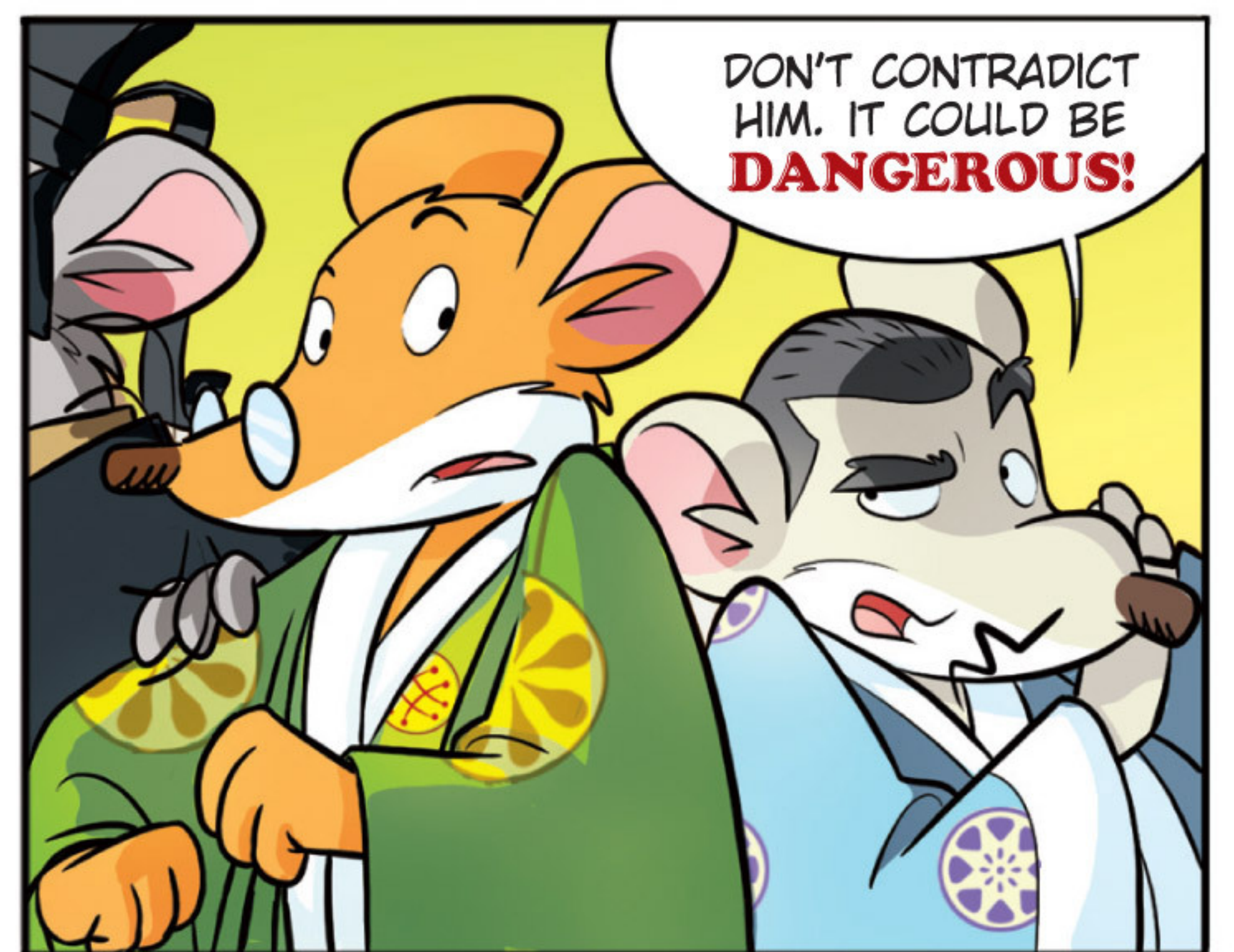
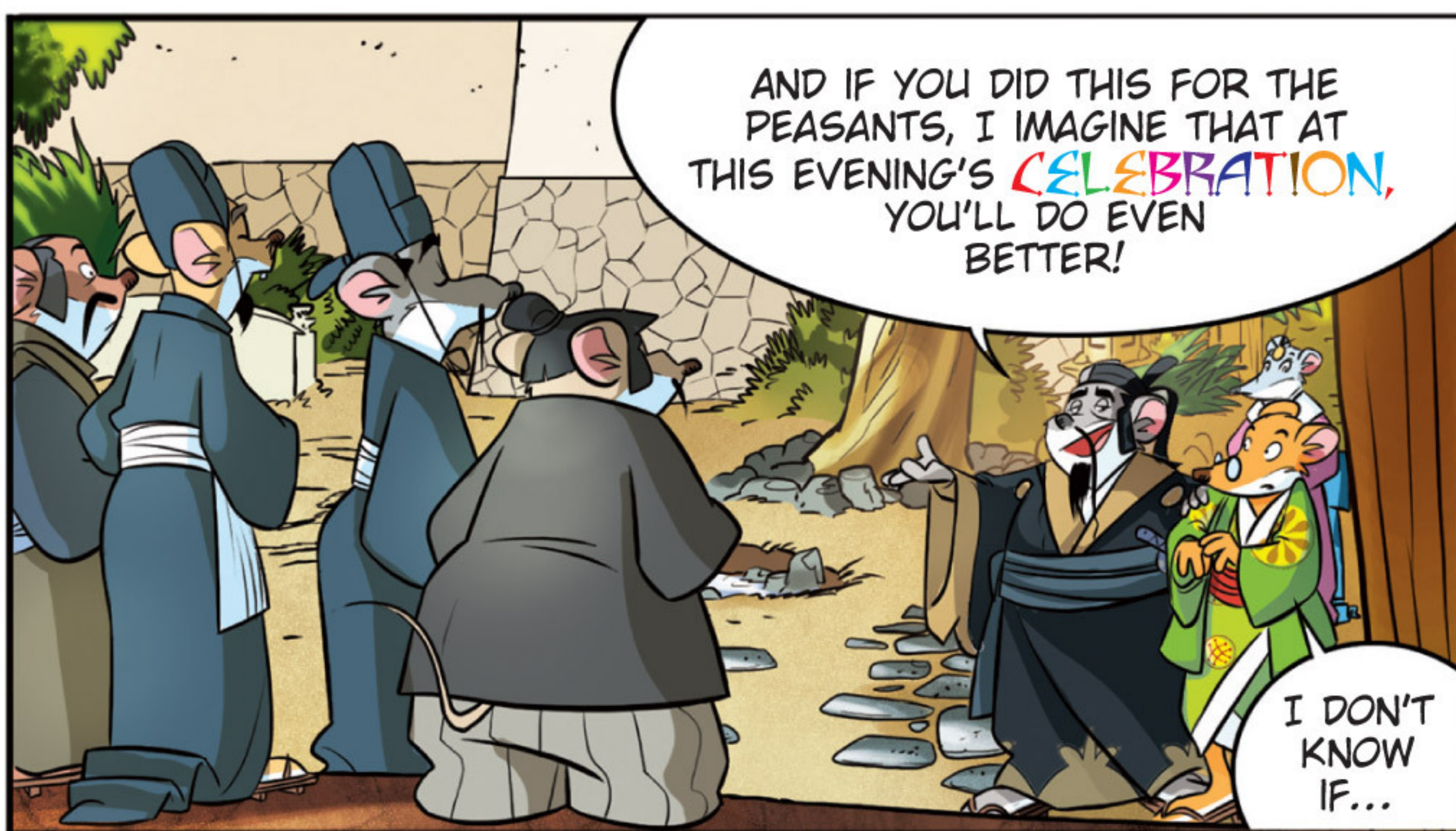
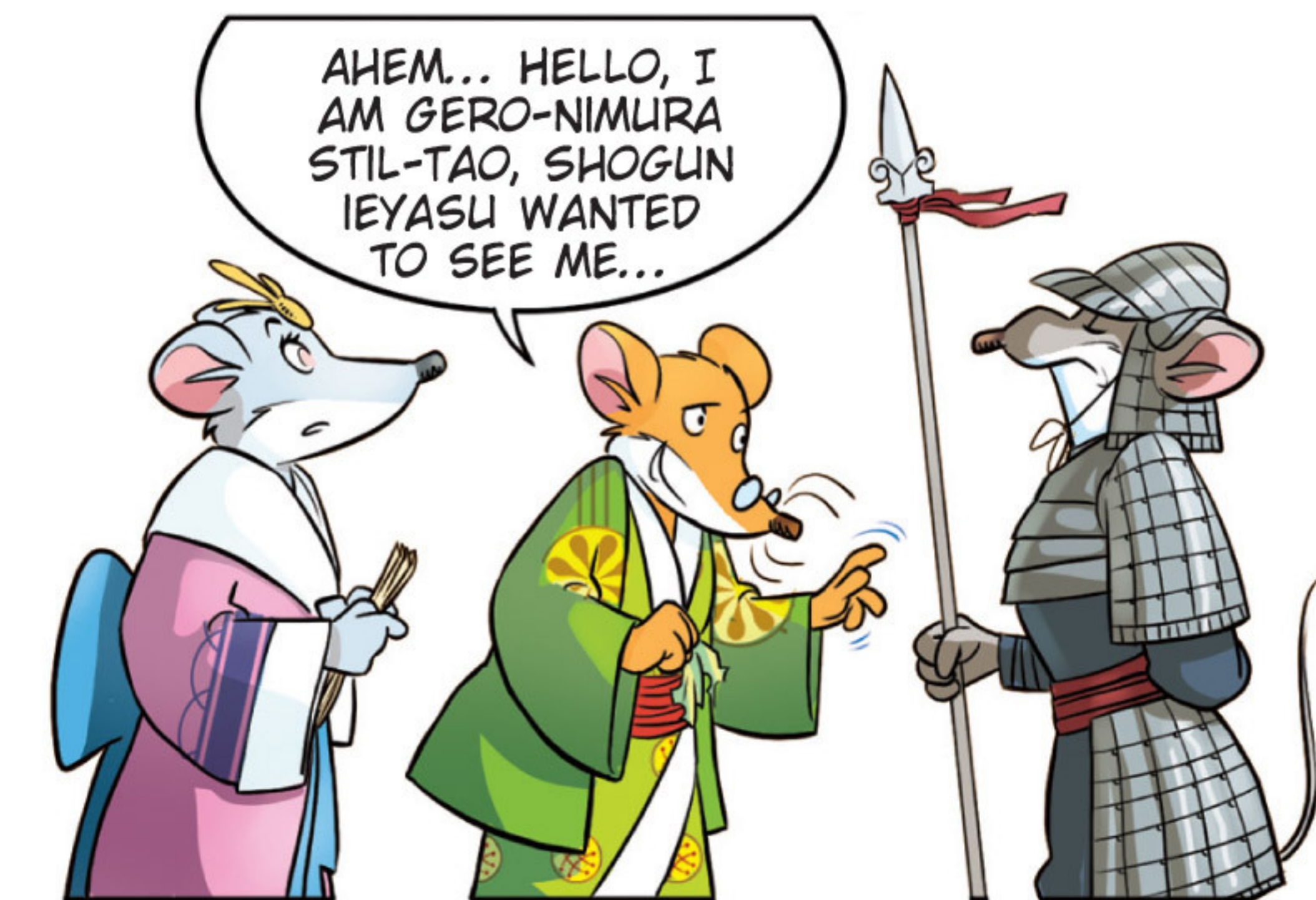
THE TITLE THAT IN
ANCIENT JAPAN WAS
GIVEN TO THE HEAD OF
MILITARY EXPEDITIONS.
STARTING IN 1192, THE
TITLE BECAME HEREDITARY
AND SHOGUN BECAME THE
DE FACTO RULERS OF THE
COUNTRY, WHILE THE
ROLE OF EMPEROR
MAINLY RETAINED A
HISTORICAL FUNCTION.

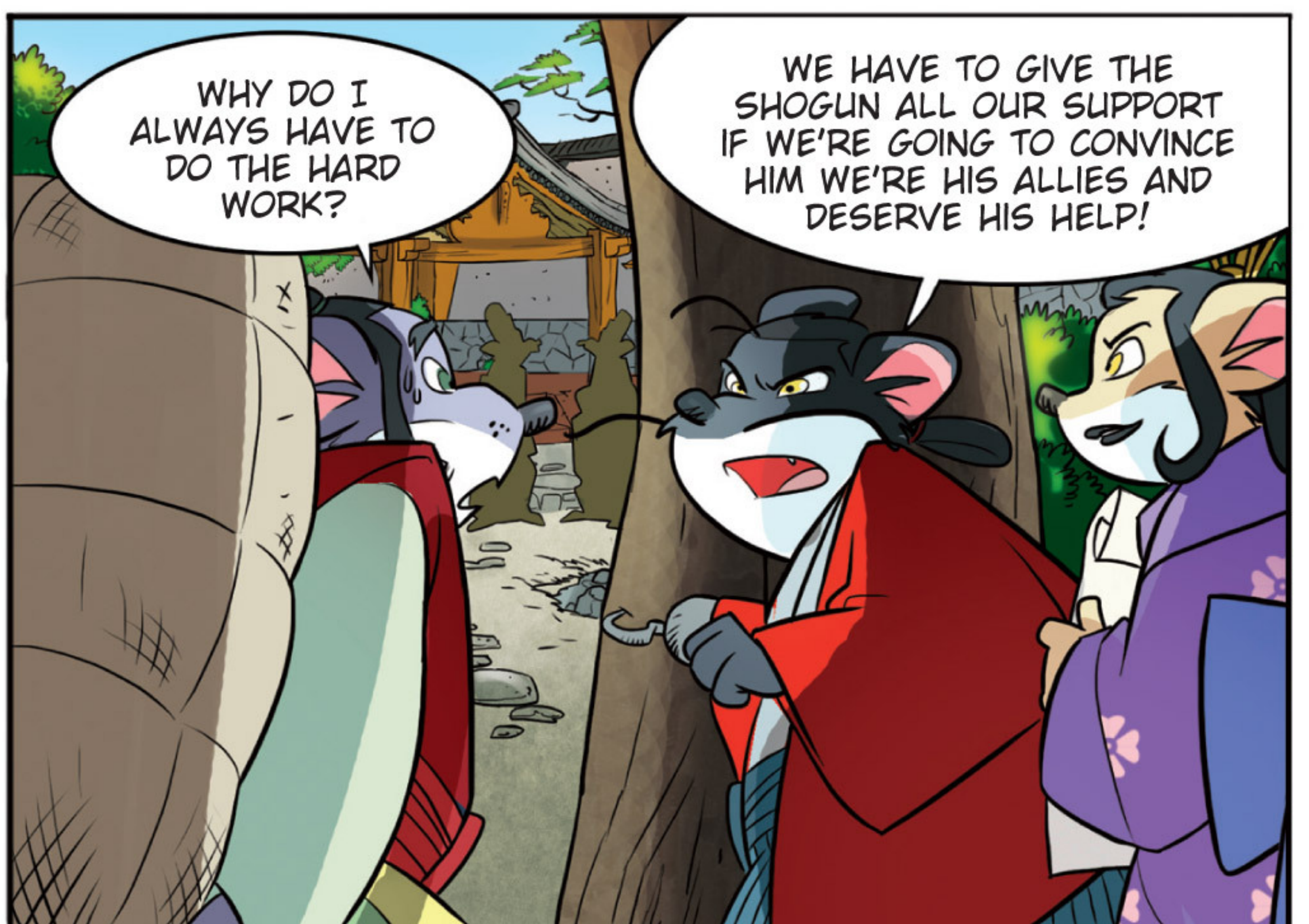
THE PAST FEW DAYS,
THE SHOGUN HAS BEEN
DECIDING HOW TO DIVIDE THE
FIEFDOMS AMONG HIS MOST
FAITHFUL
SUBJECTS.

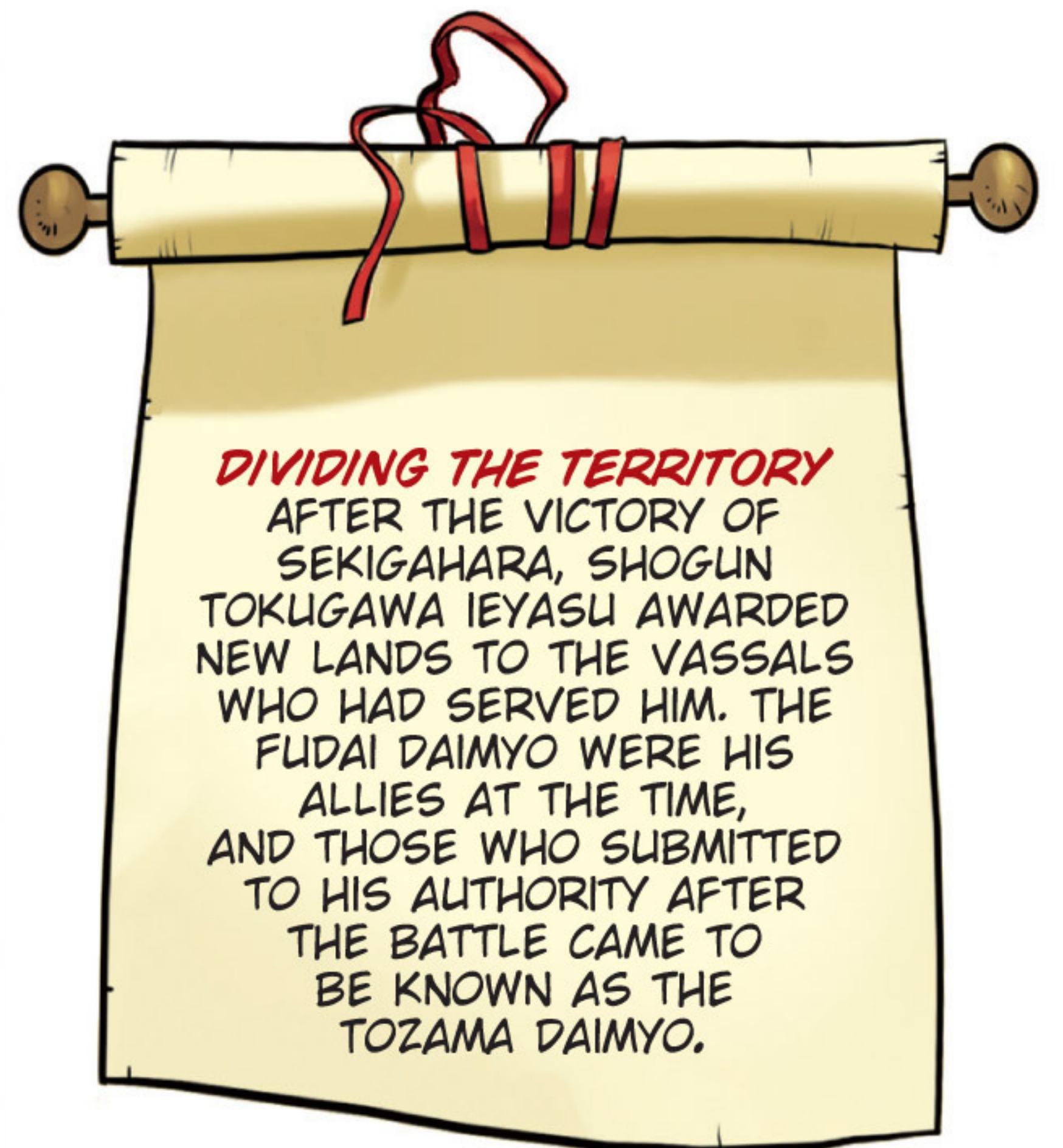
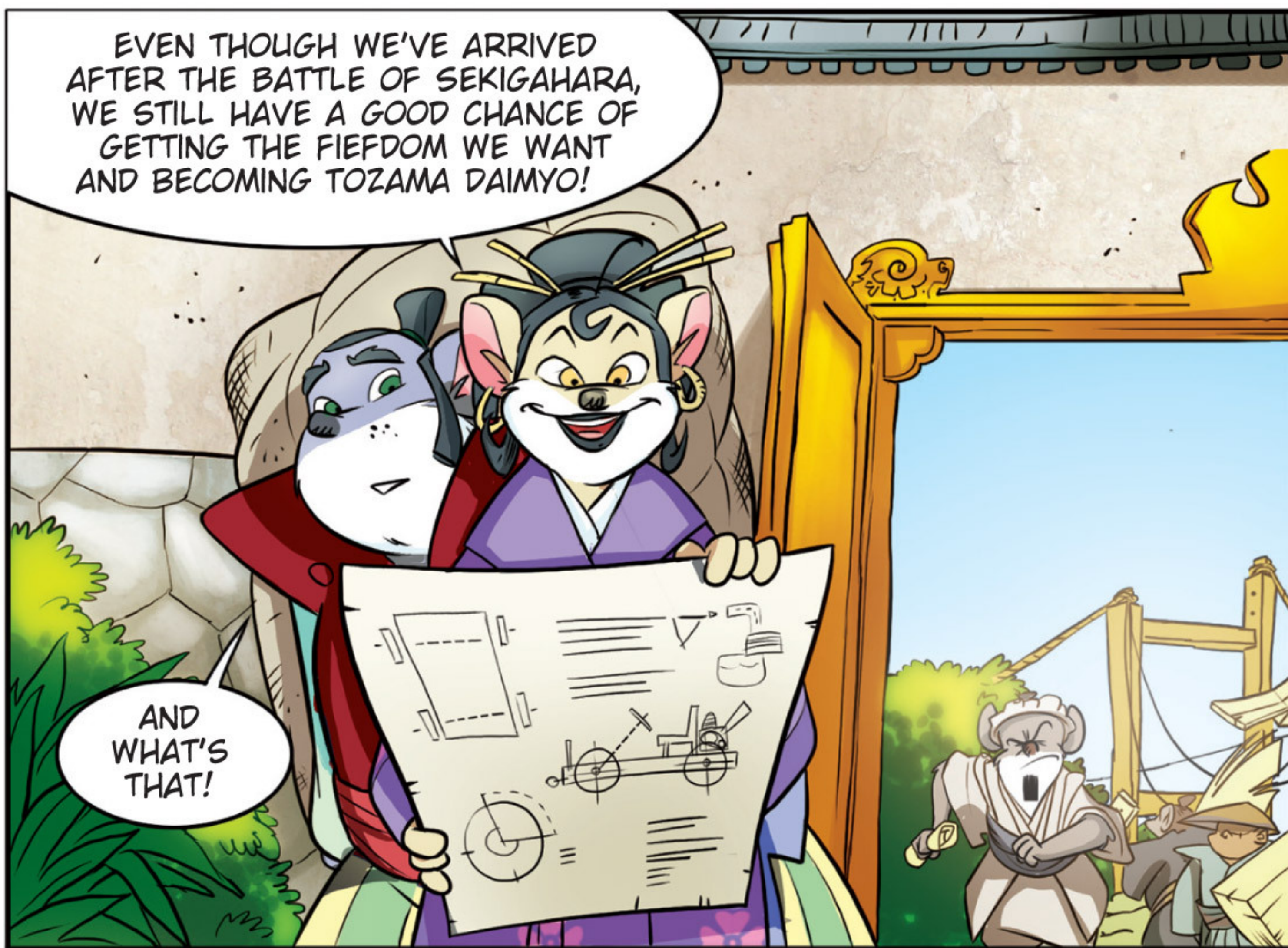
WE'VE FINALLY DISCOVERED WHY THE
PIRATE CATS HAVE COME TO THIS PERIOD:
TO GET A FIEFDOM TO PASS DOWN
TO THEIR OWN DESCENDANTS!

BUT WHY ARE
THEY LIGHTING THE FIRES?
WHAT DO THEY GAIN FROM
DESTROYING THE CITY?

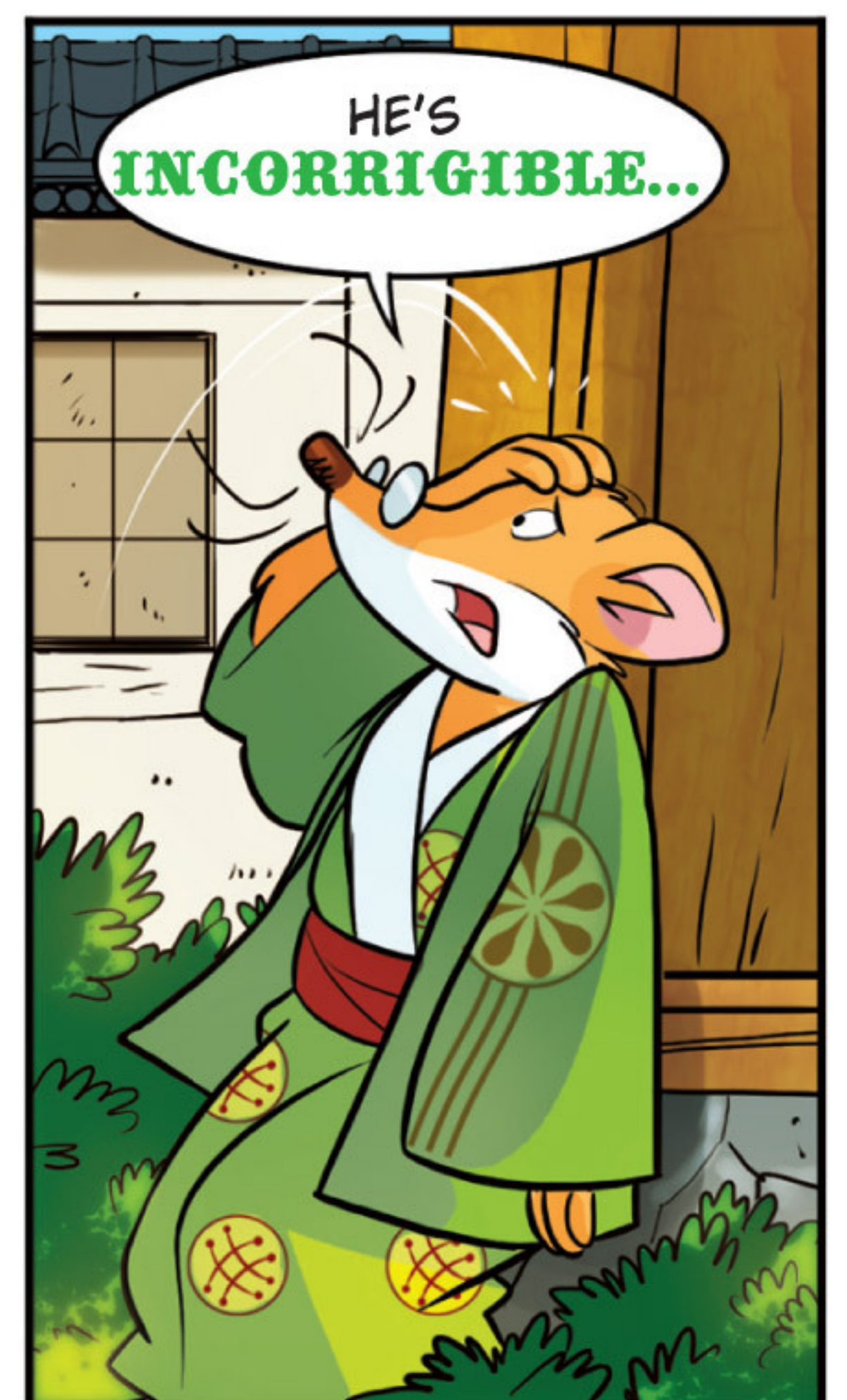
RELAX! I'M HERE TO
PROTECT YOU, TRAP THE
CAT-NABBER!

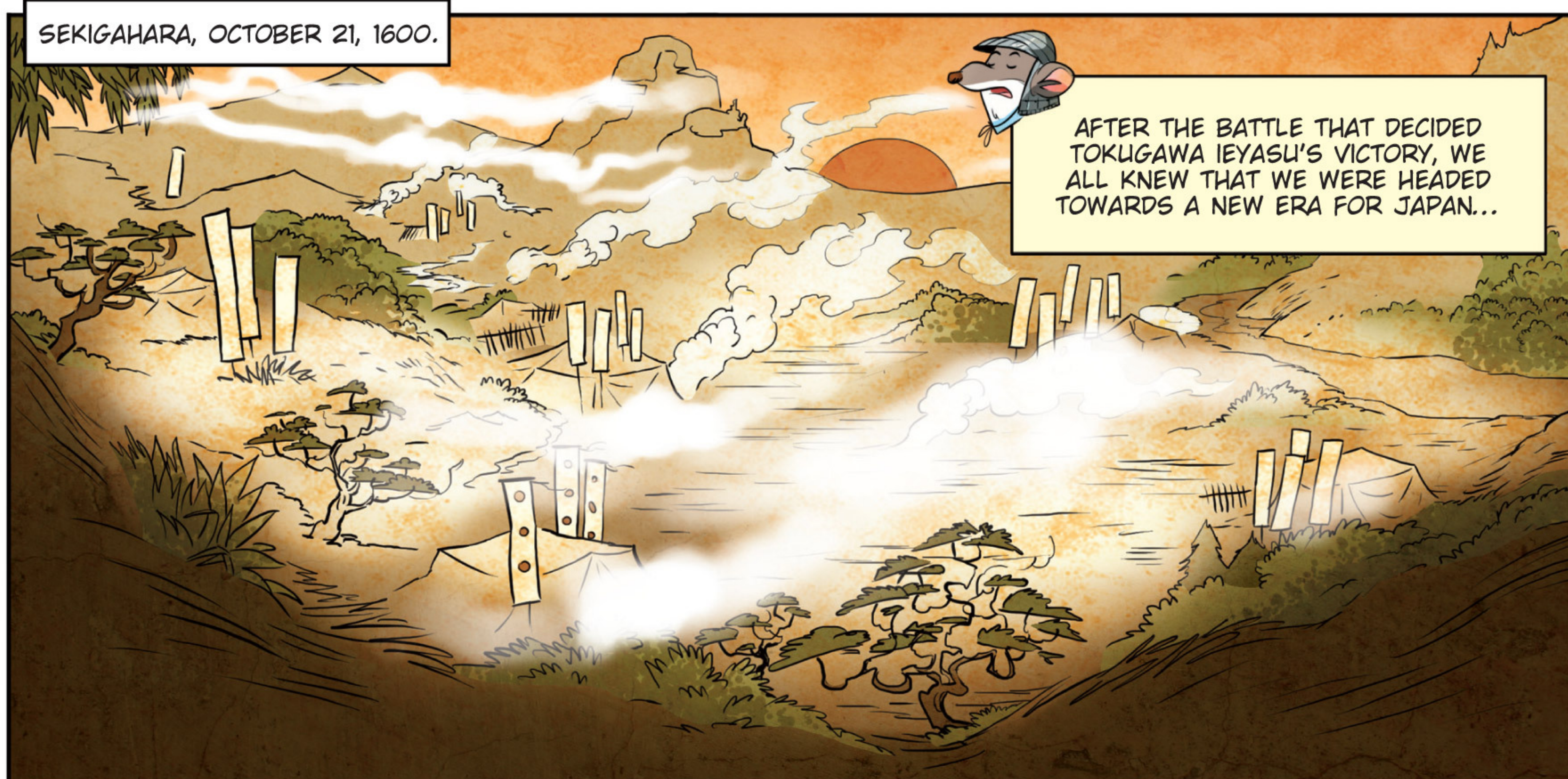
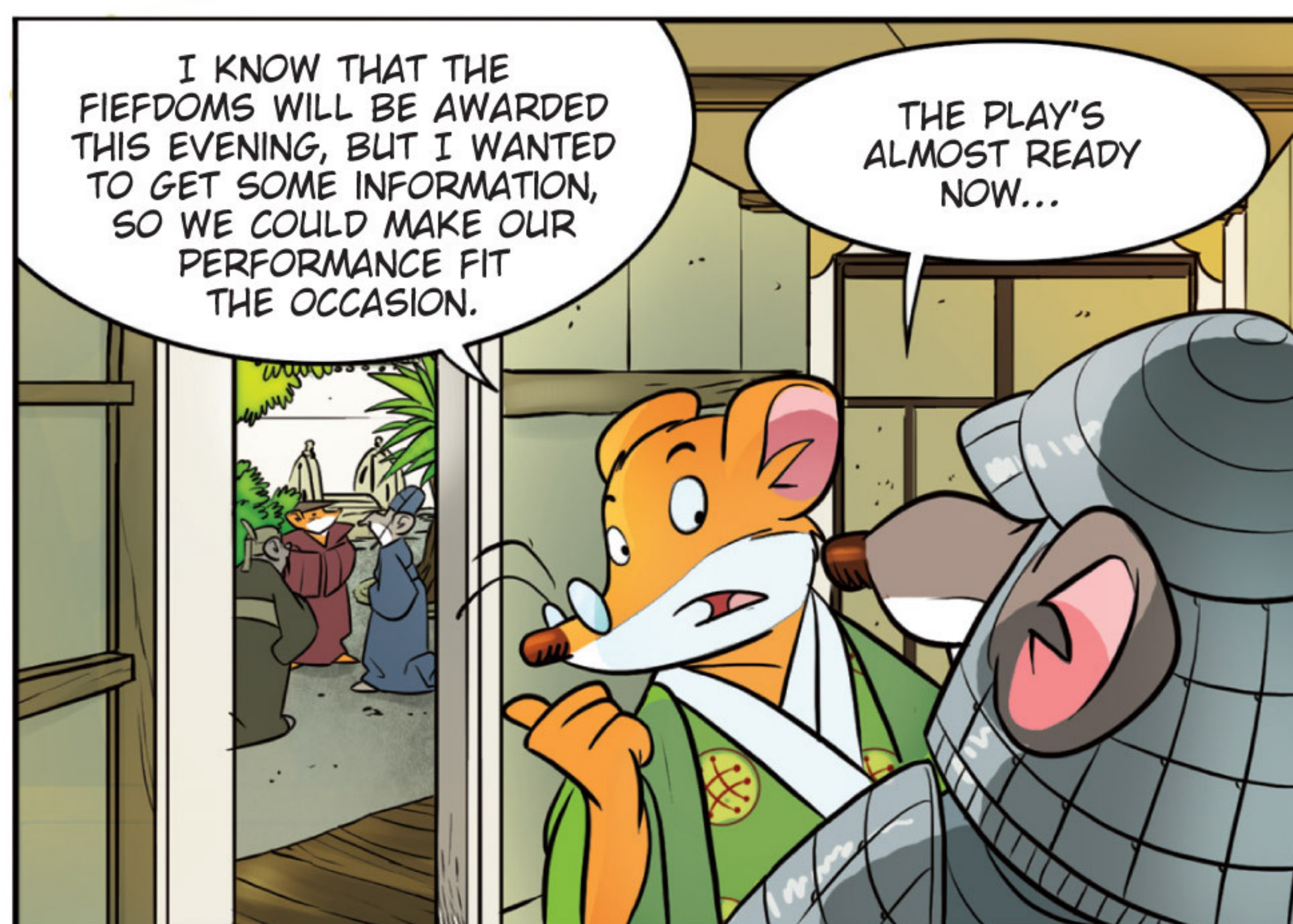


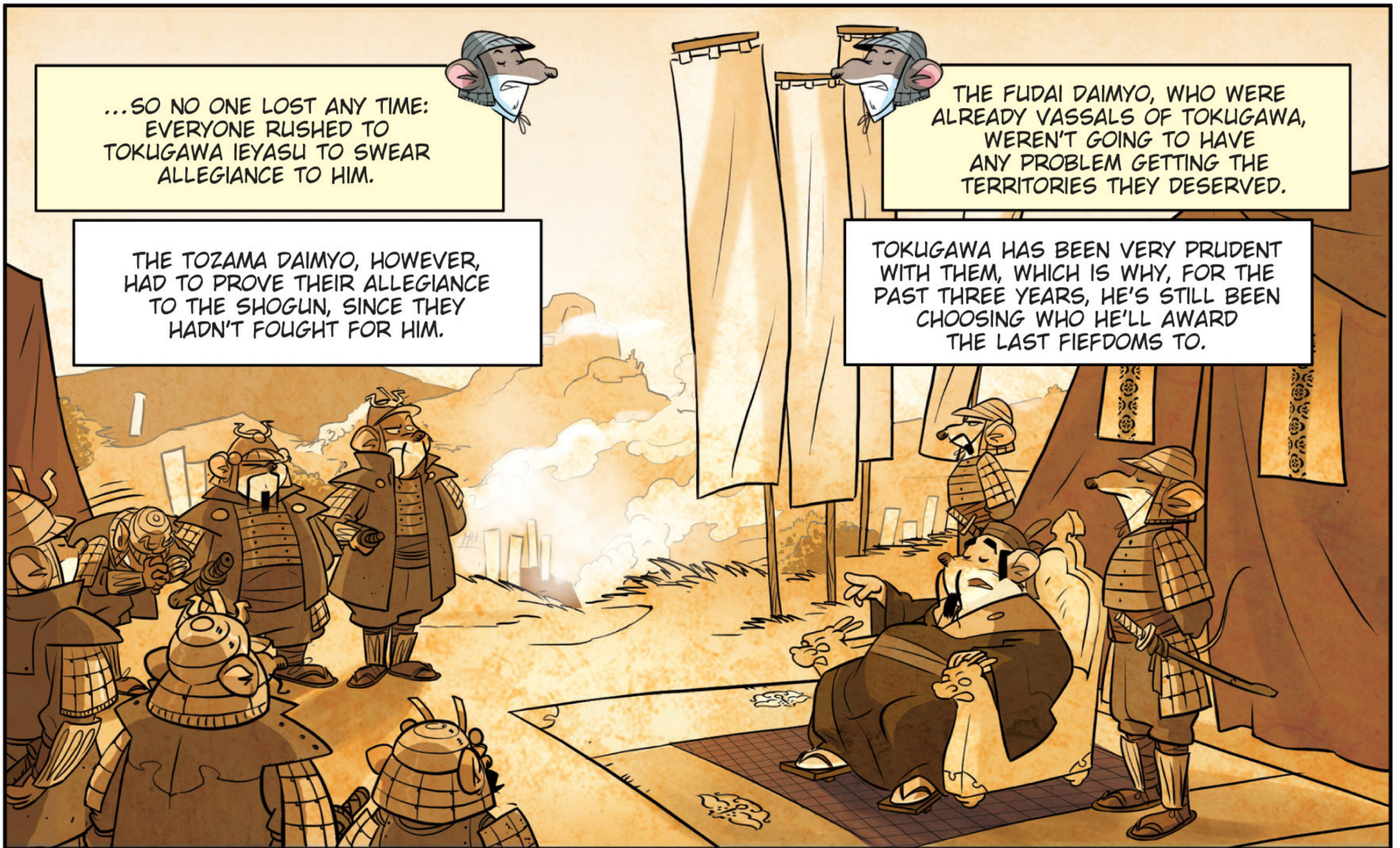












...SO NO ONE LOST ANY TIME:
EVERYONE RUSHED TO
TOKUGAWA IEYASU TO SWEAR
ALLEGIANCE TO HIM.

THE FUDAI DAIMYO, WHO WERE
ALREADY VASSALS OF TOKUGAWA,
WEREN'T GOING TO HAVE
ANY PROBLEM GETTING THE
TERRITORIES THEY DESERVED.

THE TOZAMA DAIMYO, HOWEVER,
HAD TO PROVE THEIR ALLEGIANCE
TO THE SHOGUN, SINCE THEY
HADN'T FOUGHT FOR HIM.

TOKUGAWA HAS BEEN VERY PRUDENT
WITH THEM, WHICH IS WHY, FOR THE
PAST THREE YEARS, HE'S STILL BEEN
CHOOSING WHO HE'LL AWARD
THE LAST FIEFDOMS TO.

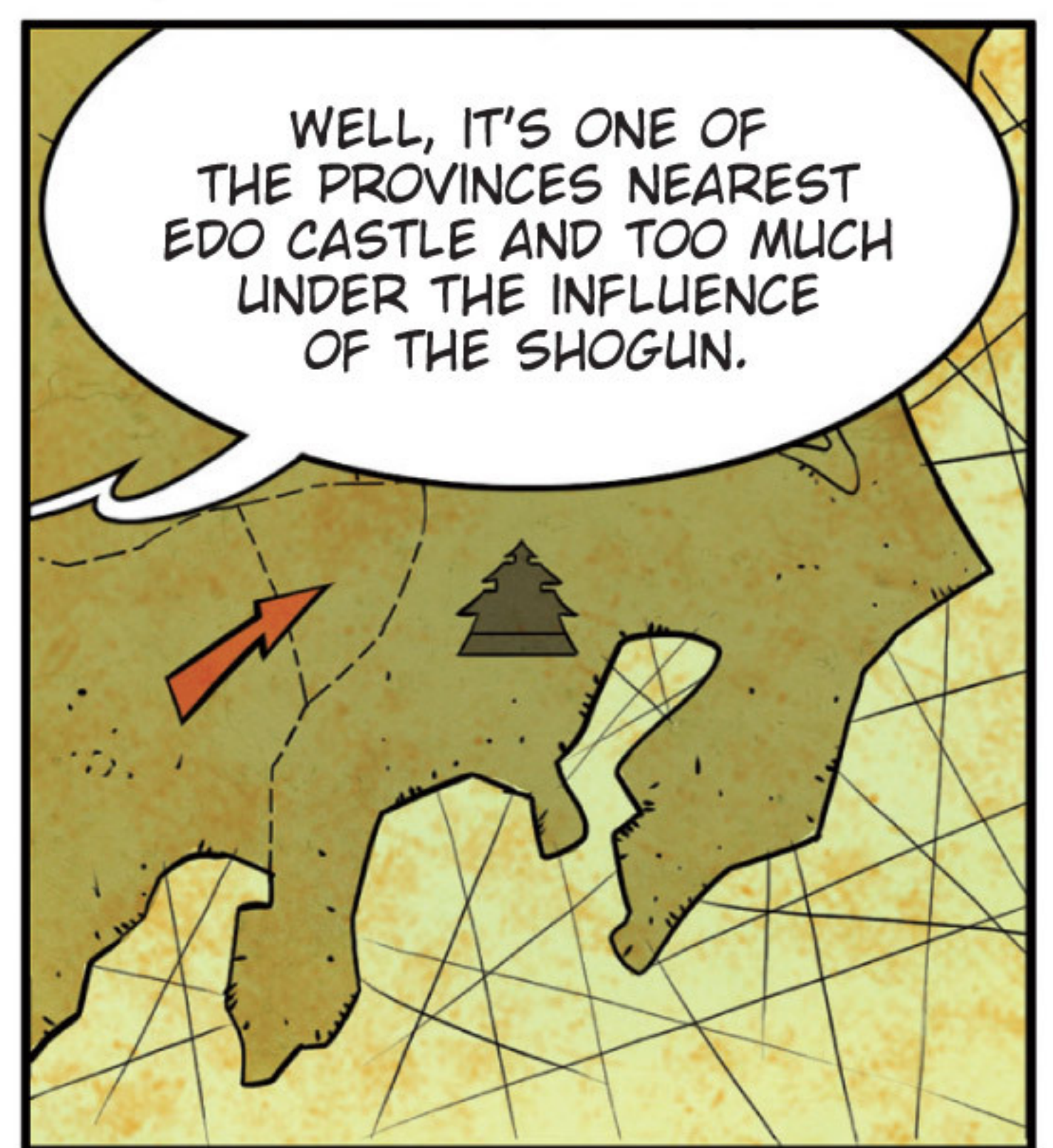


AND AMONG THESE
LORDS, IS THERE ONE
WHO ARRIVED AT THE
LAST MINUTE? OR
WHO'S ACTING
STRANGELY?



FOR SURE. I CAN'T SAY
THAT THE MEOWZAKI FAMILY
HAS BEEN SCHOOLED WELL
IN PROPER BEHAVIOR... BUT,
ON THE OTHER HAND,
THEY'RE ASKING FOR A
FIEFDOM THAT NO ONE
ELSE WANTS!

HOW COME?



WELL, IT'S ONE OF
THE PROVINCES NEAREST
EDO CASTLE AND TOO MUCH
UNDER THE INFLUENCE
OF THE SHOGUN.



I'M GOING
NOW. SEE YOU
AFTER THE
PERFORMANCE!

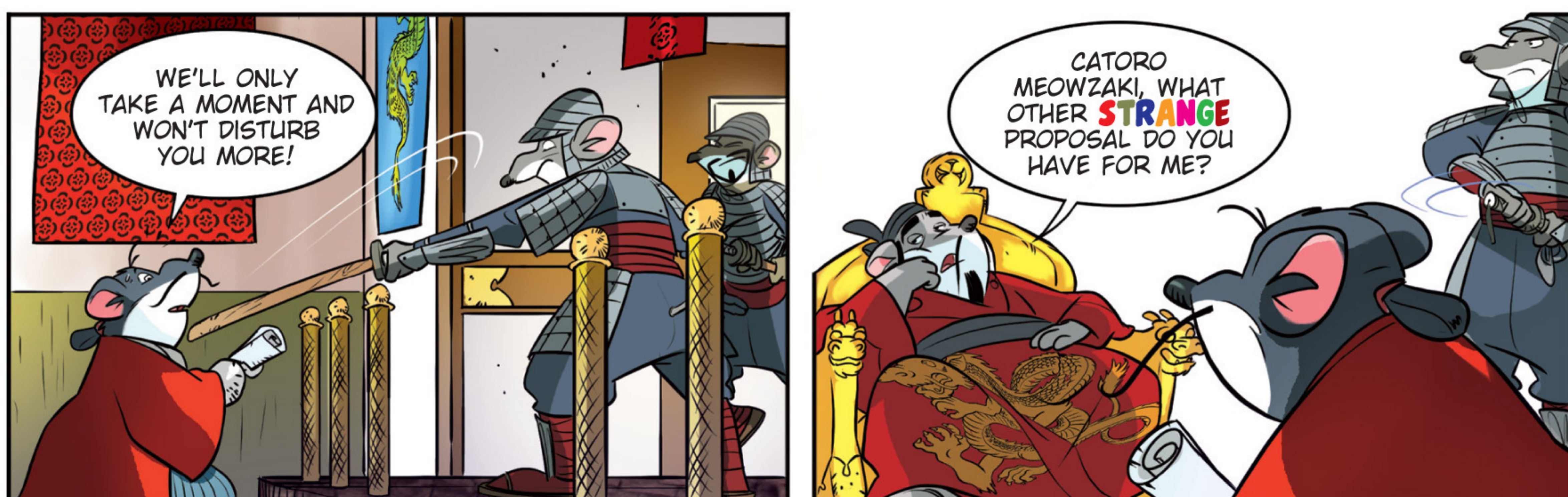
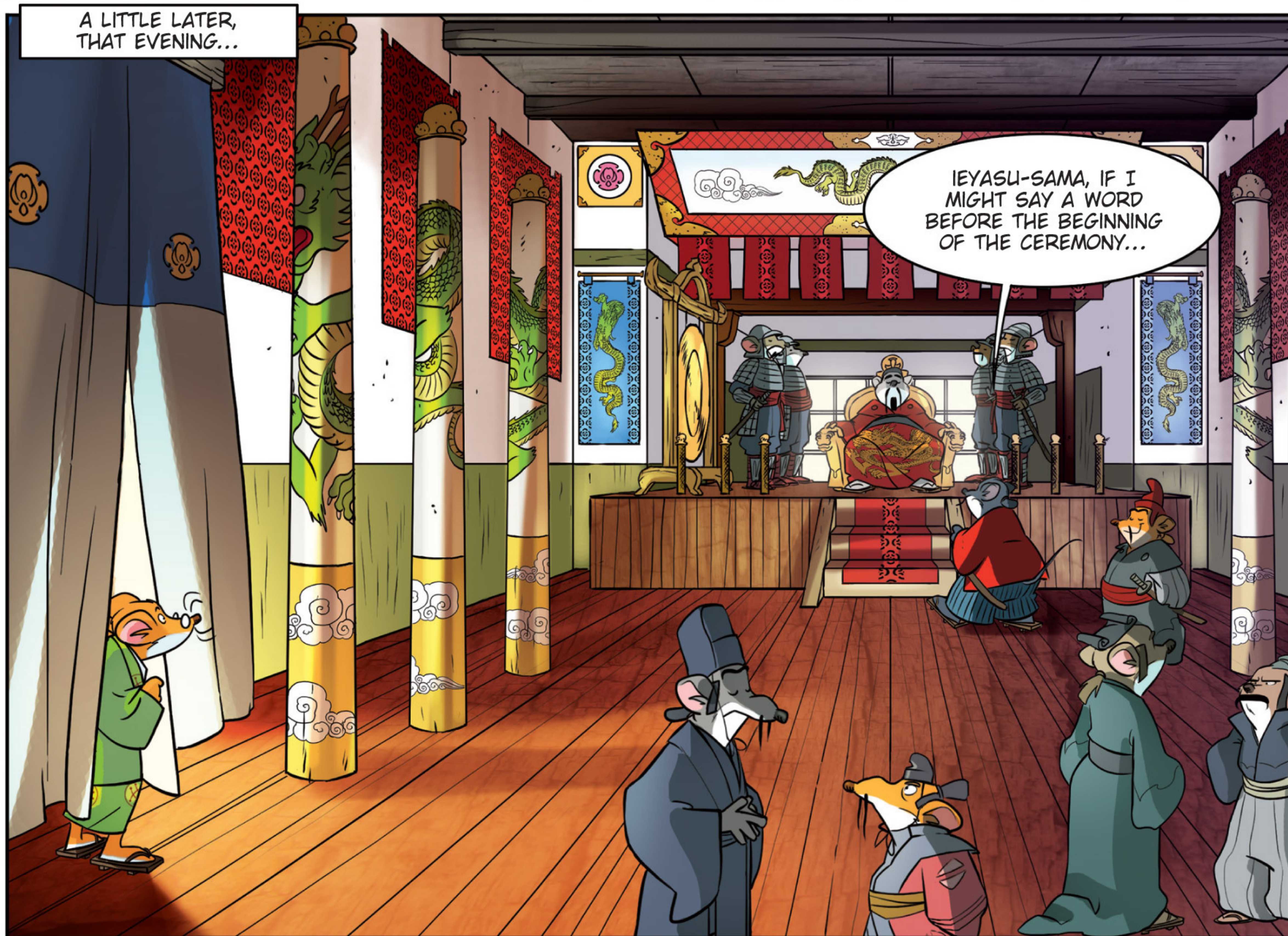
UHM...
YES.

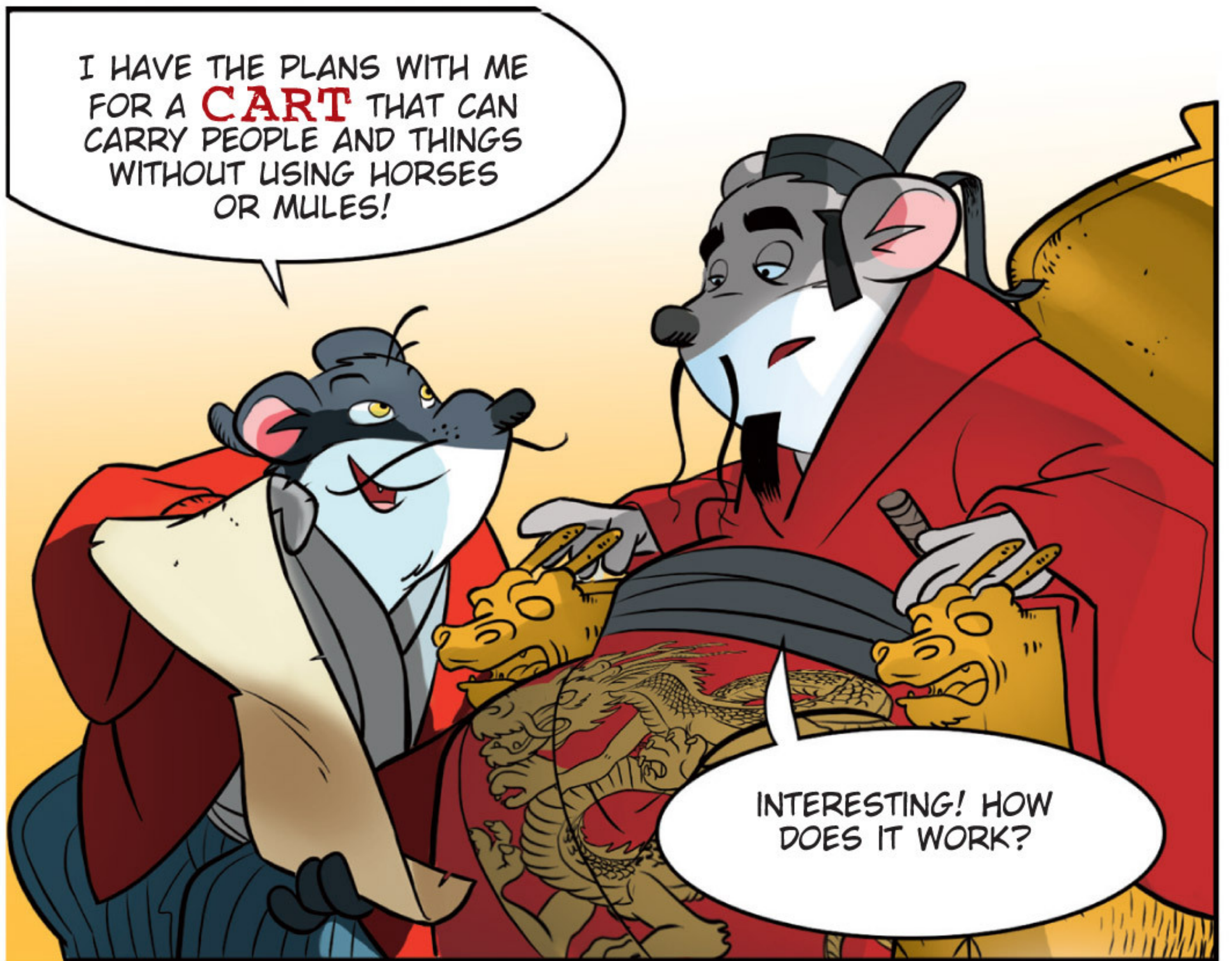
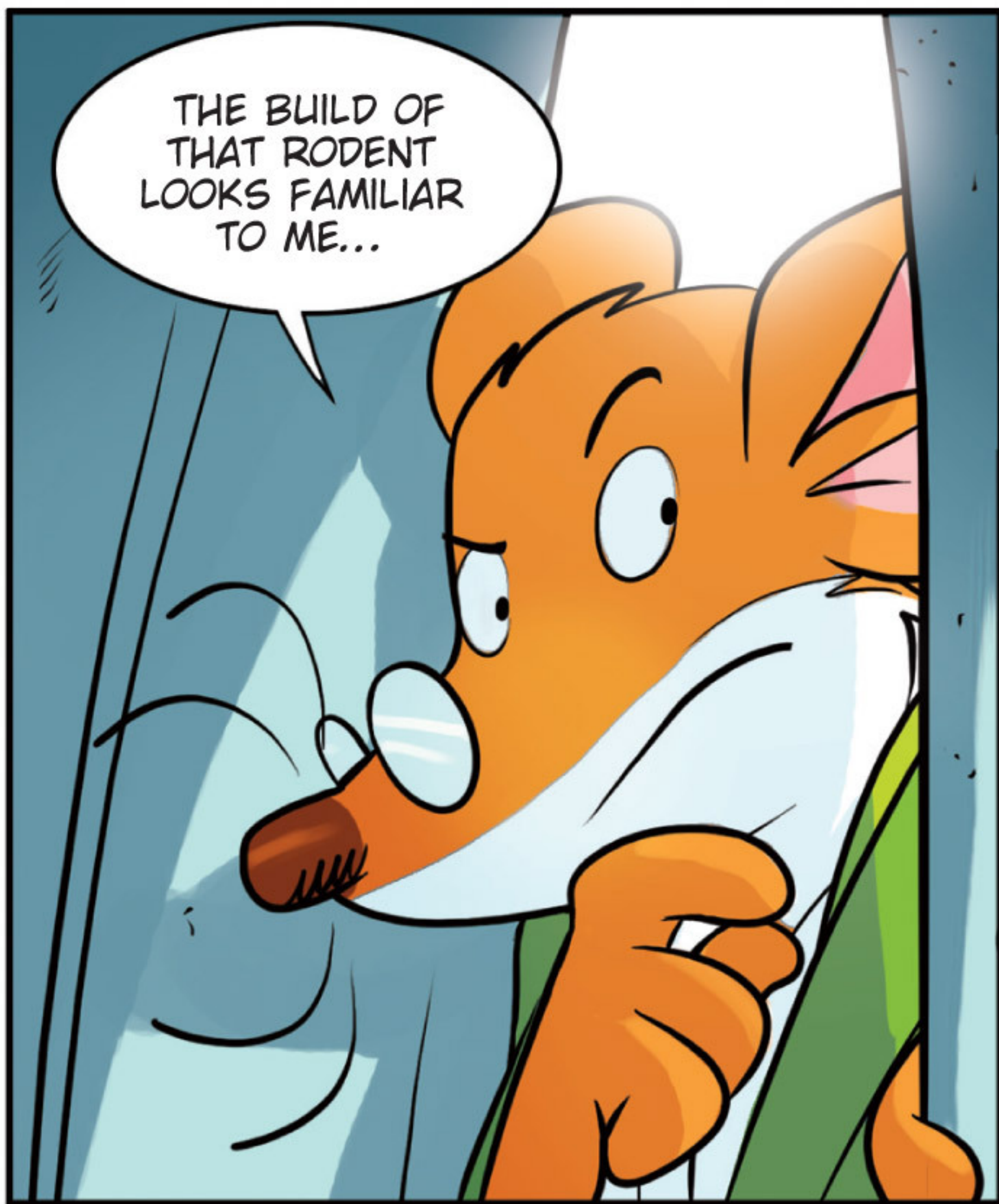
UNCLE,
YOU HAVE TO
GET READY!

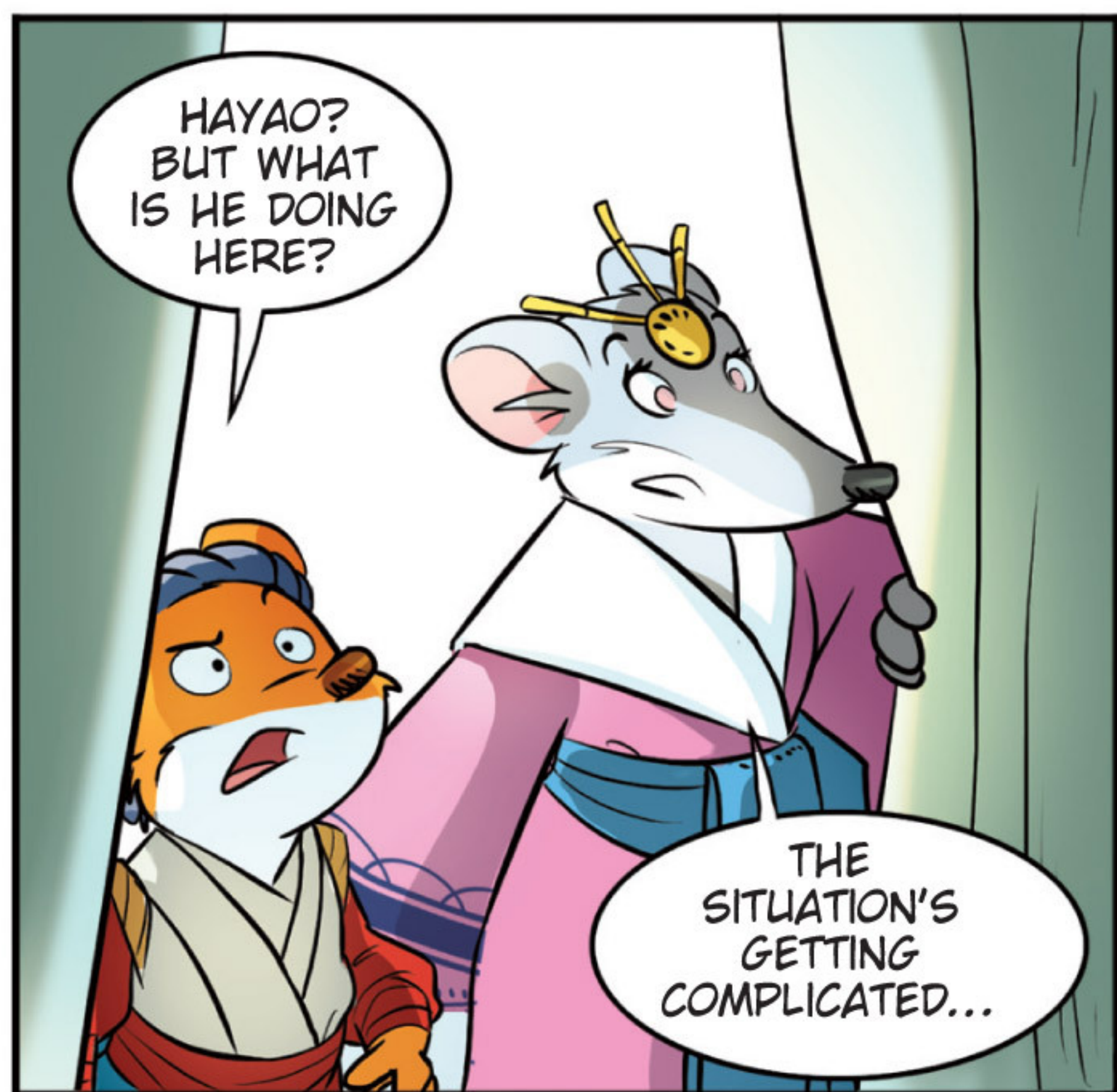
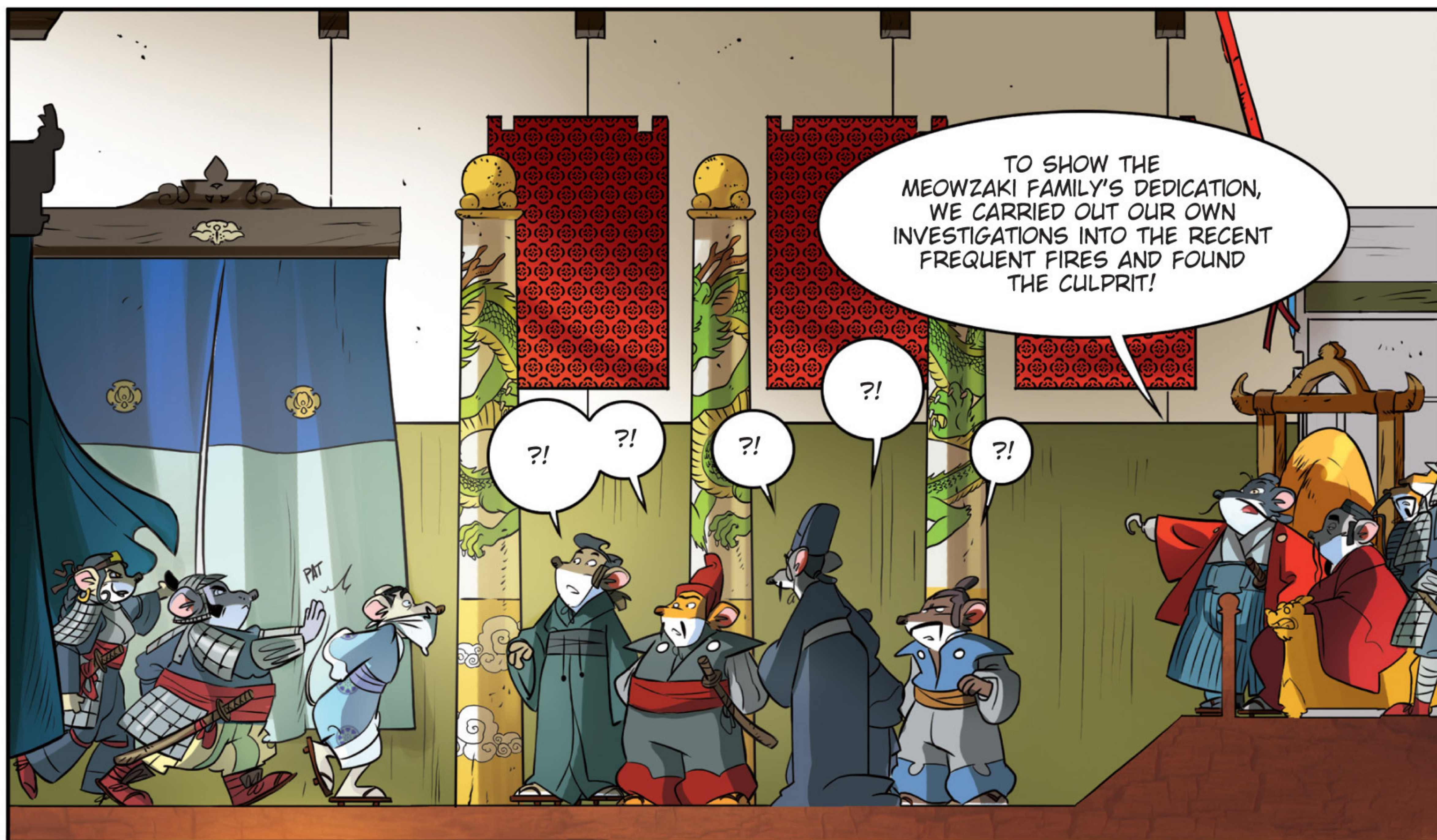


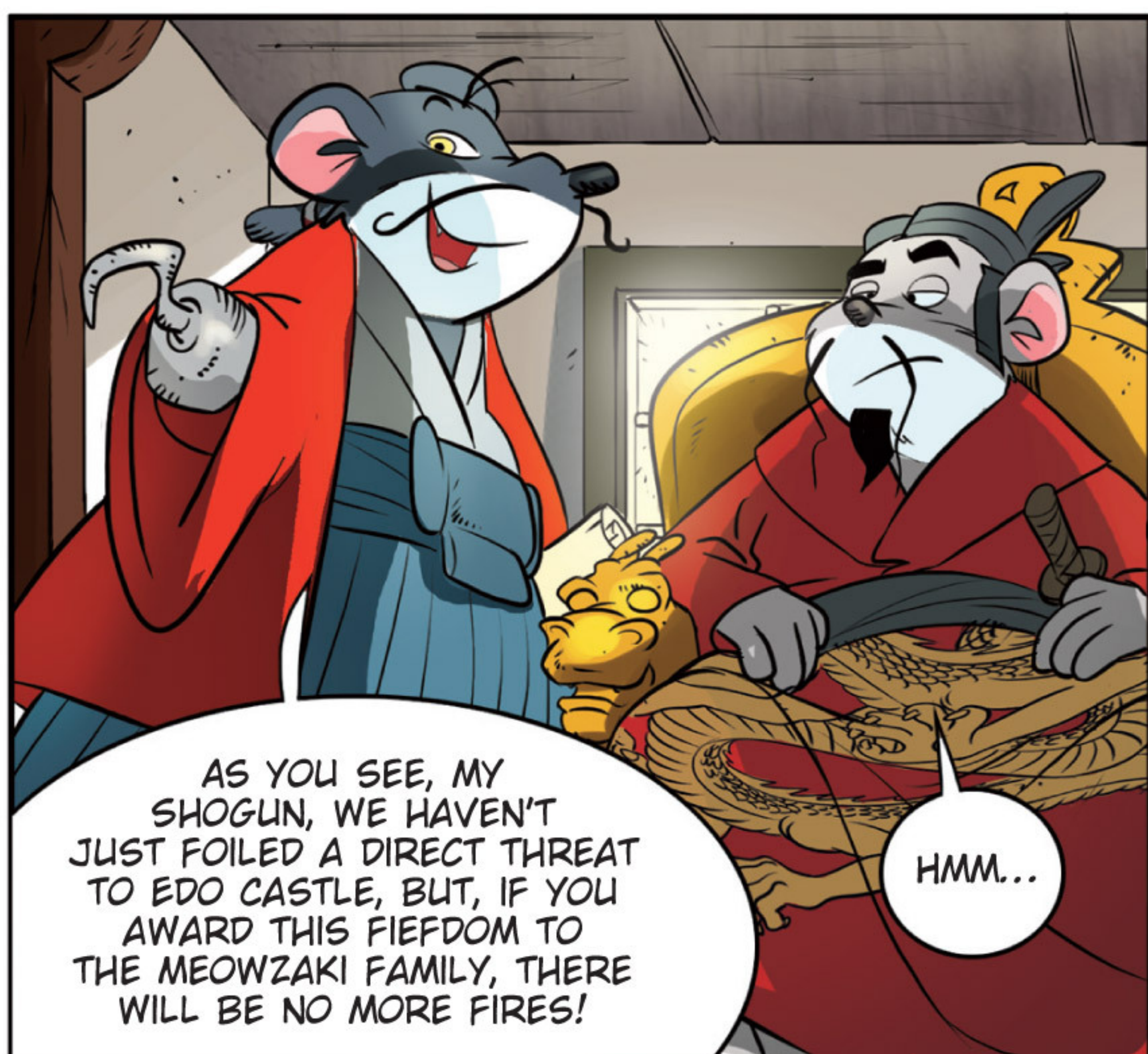
WE MANAGED TO FIND
TWO OF THE OLD COURT
COMPANY'S **COSTUMES**.
BUT YOU AND TRAP AT
LEAST HAVE TO MAKE
AN ATTEMPT NOW...

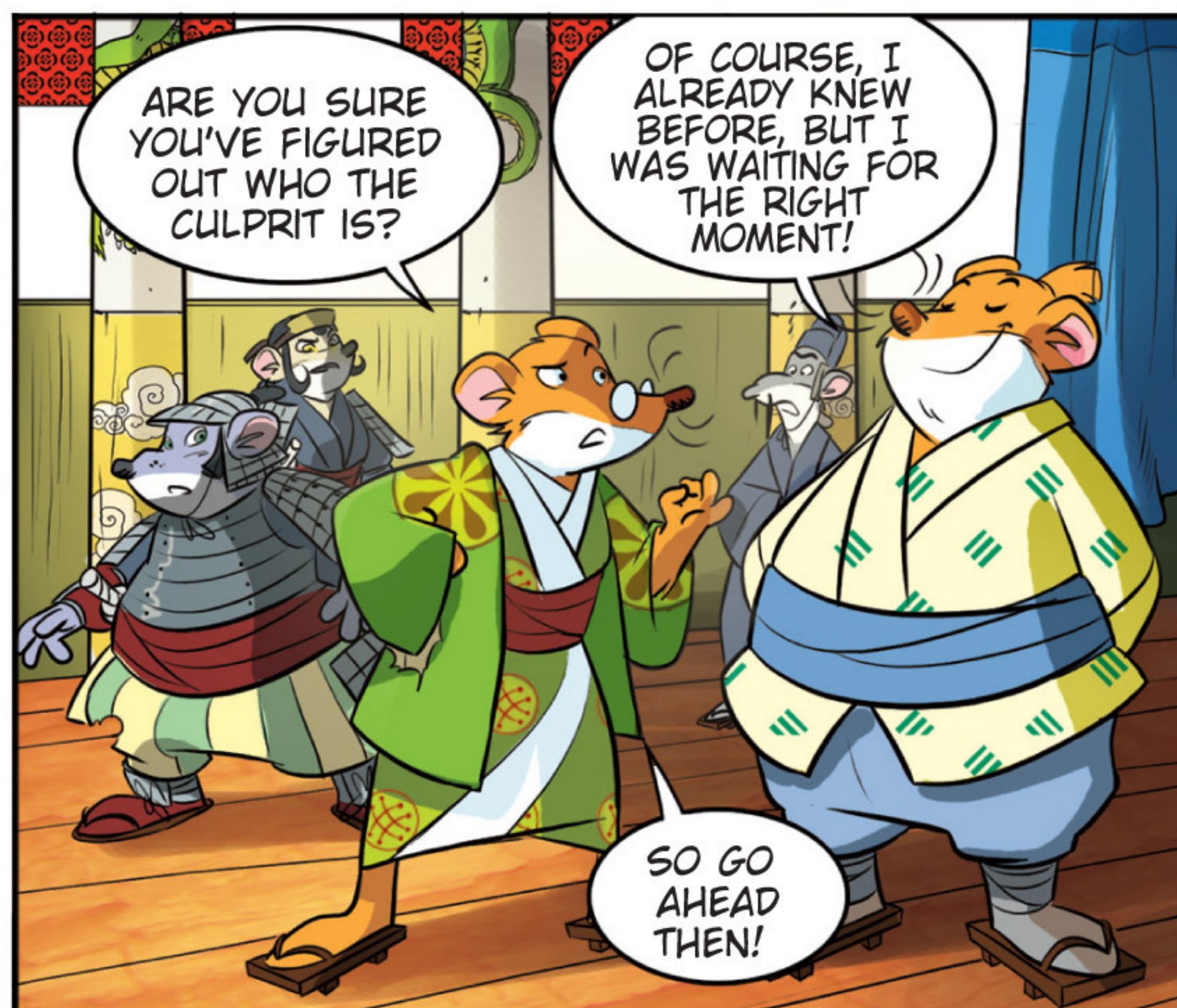
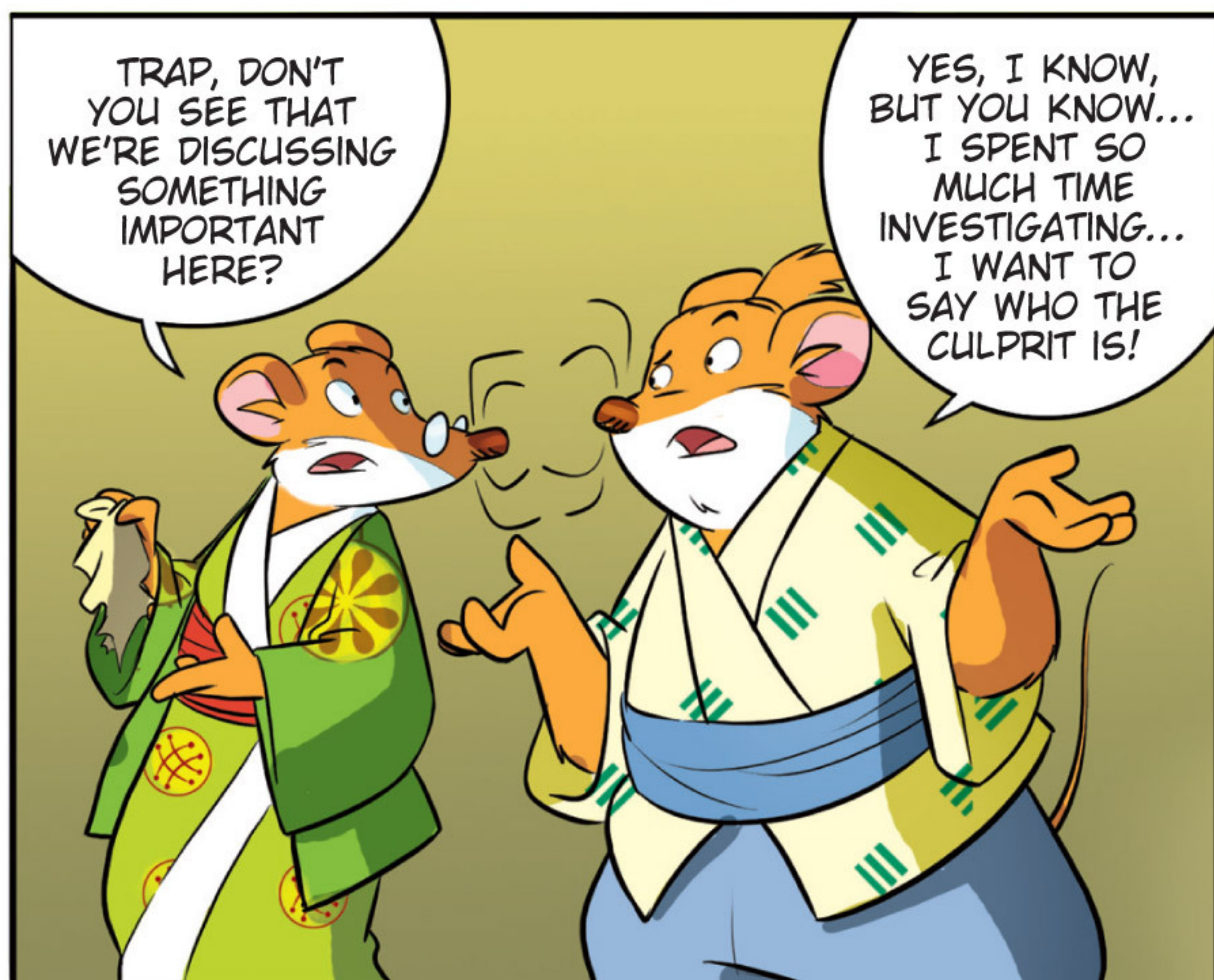
IN THE
MEANTIME,
ANY NEWS?

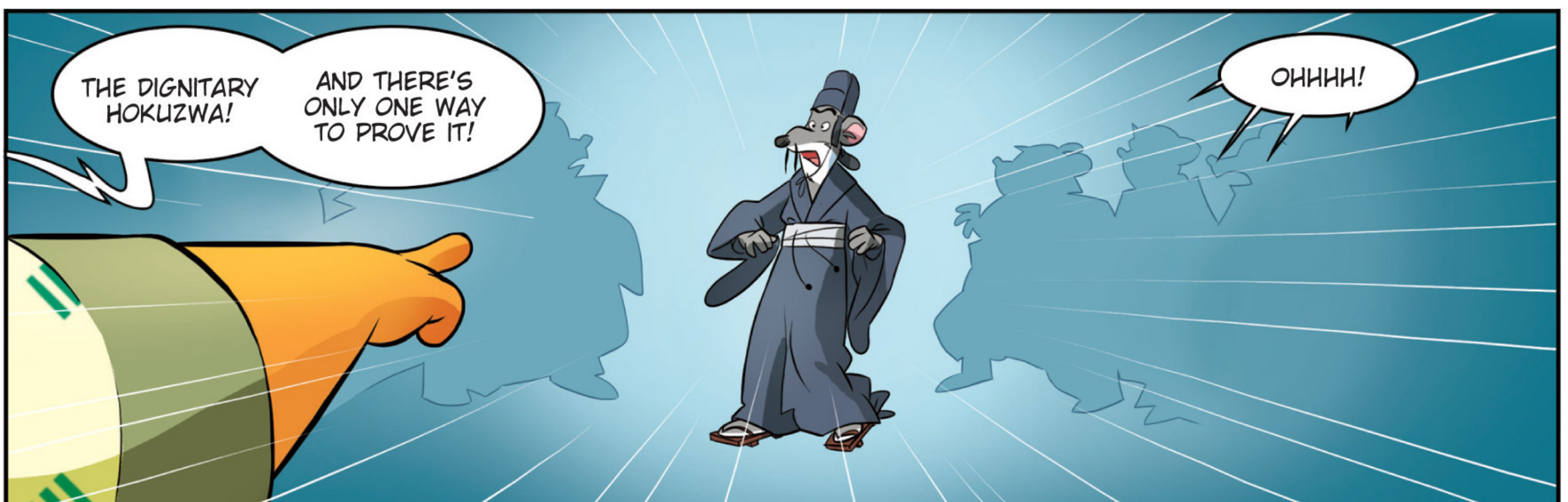
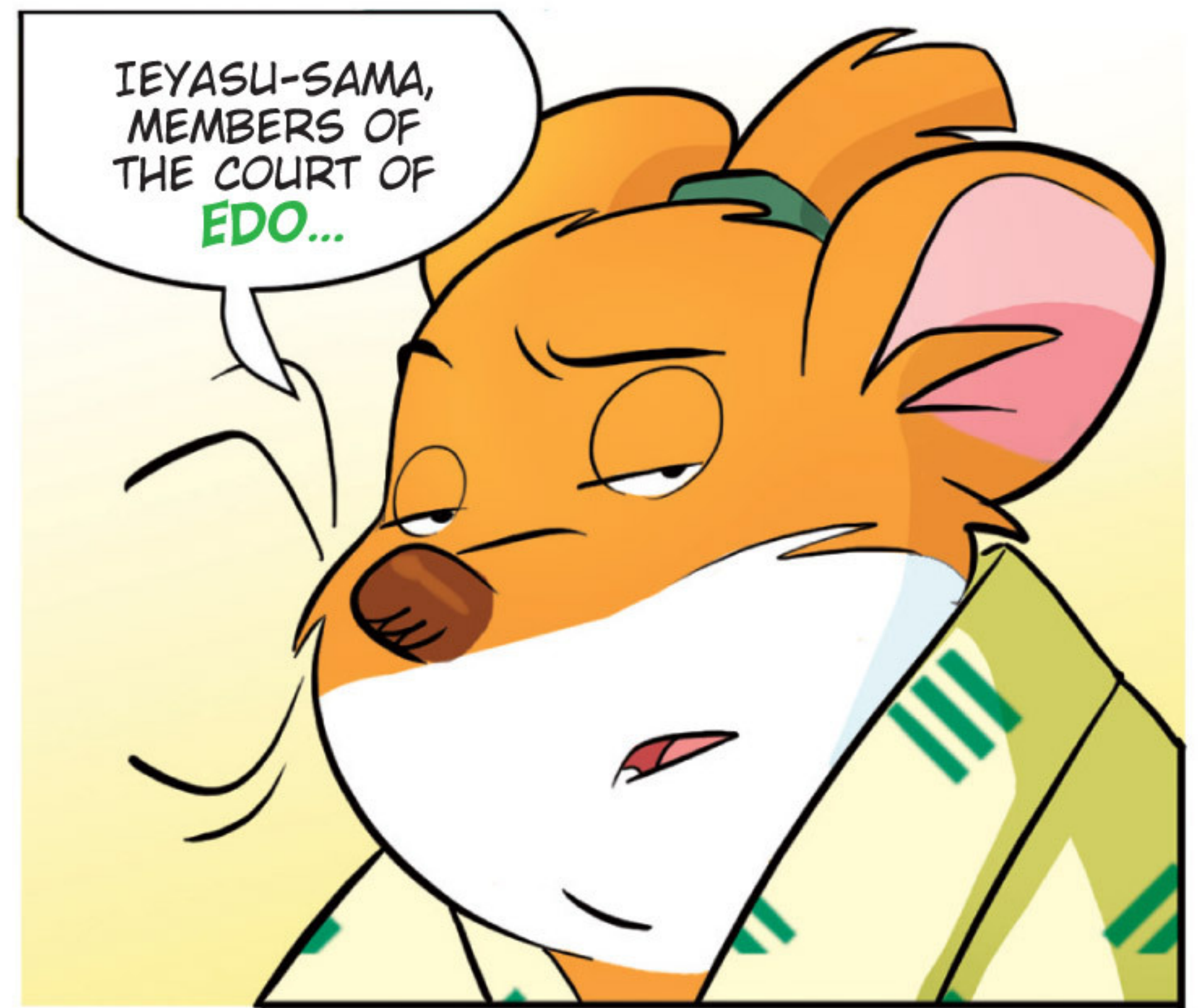


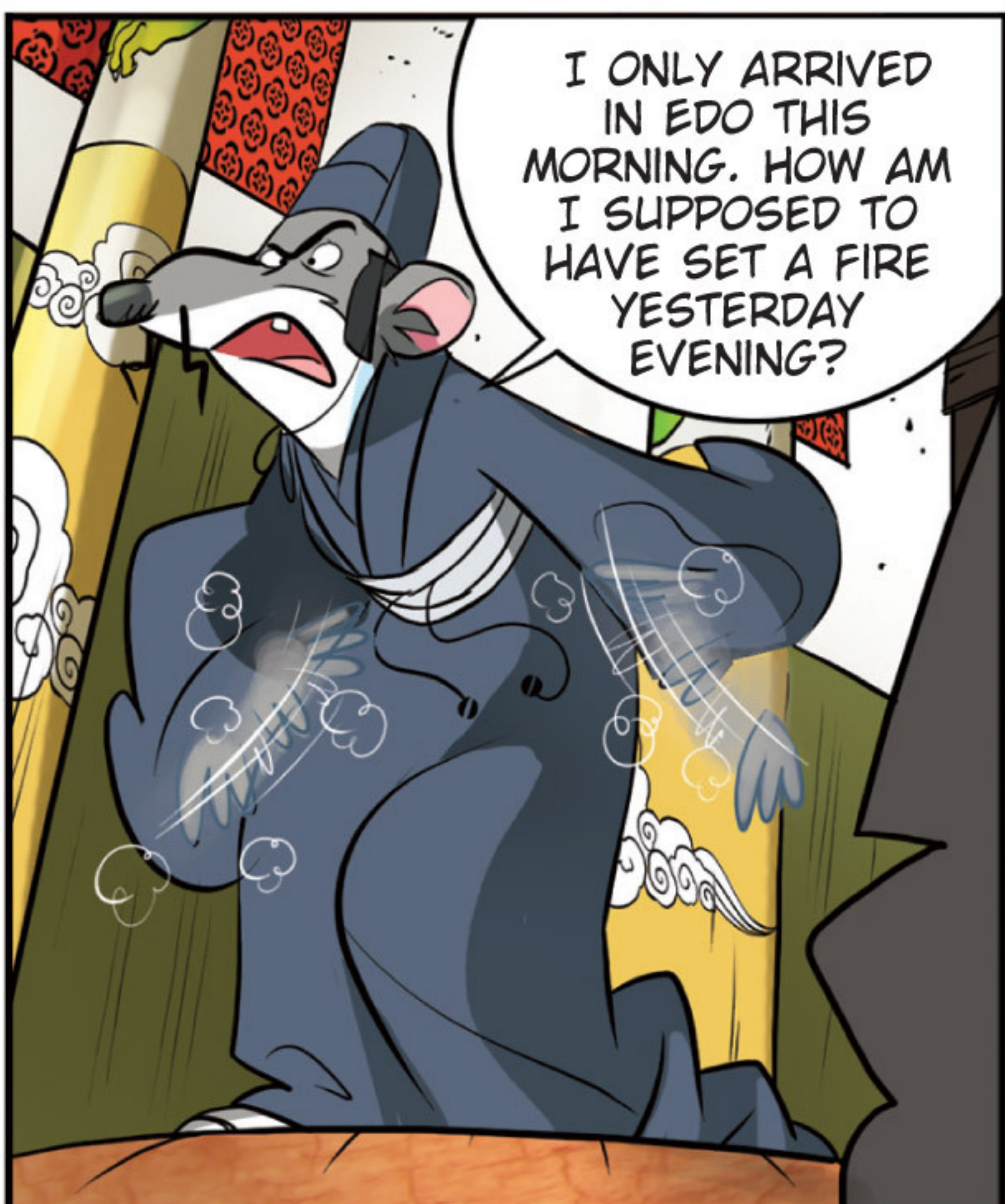
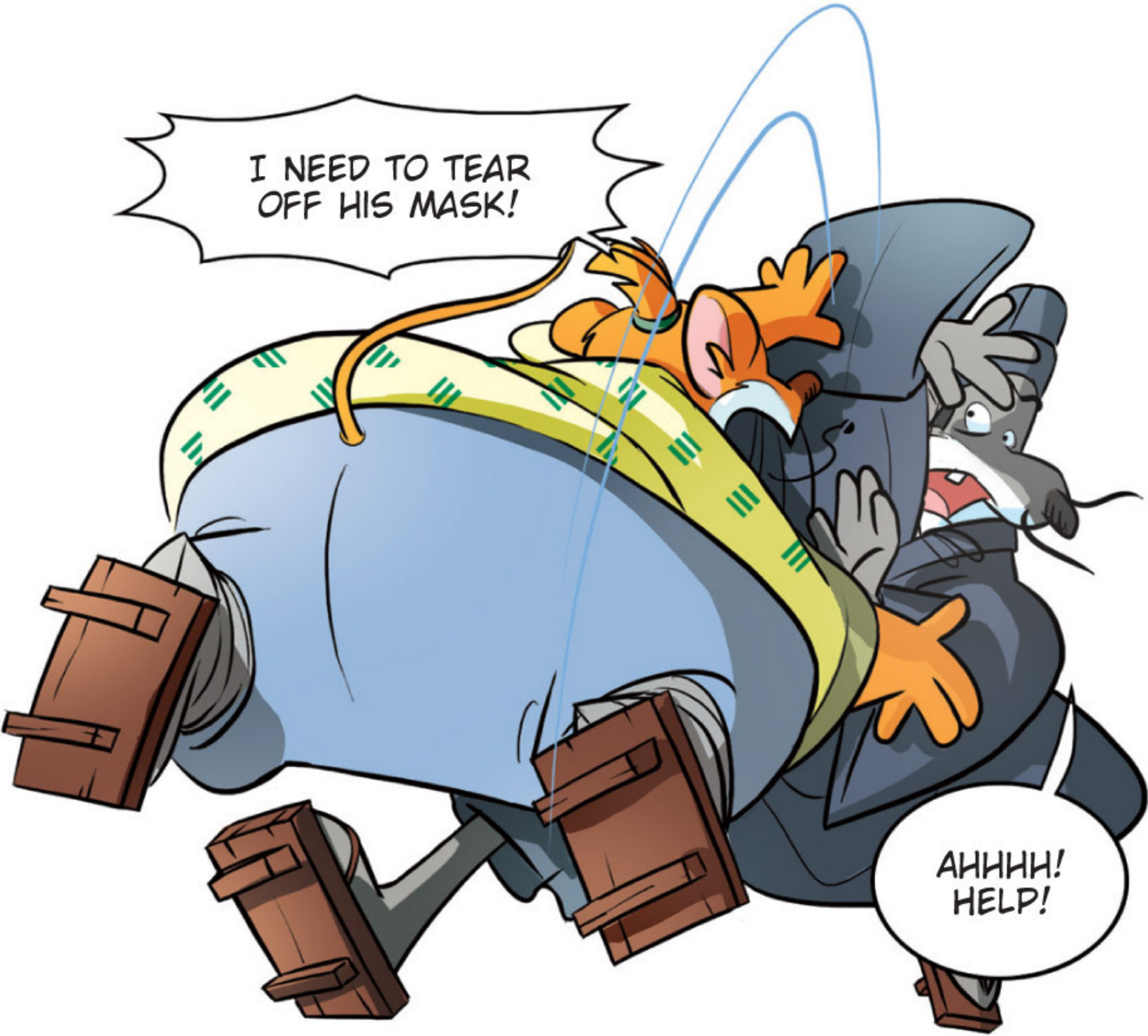




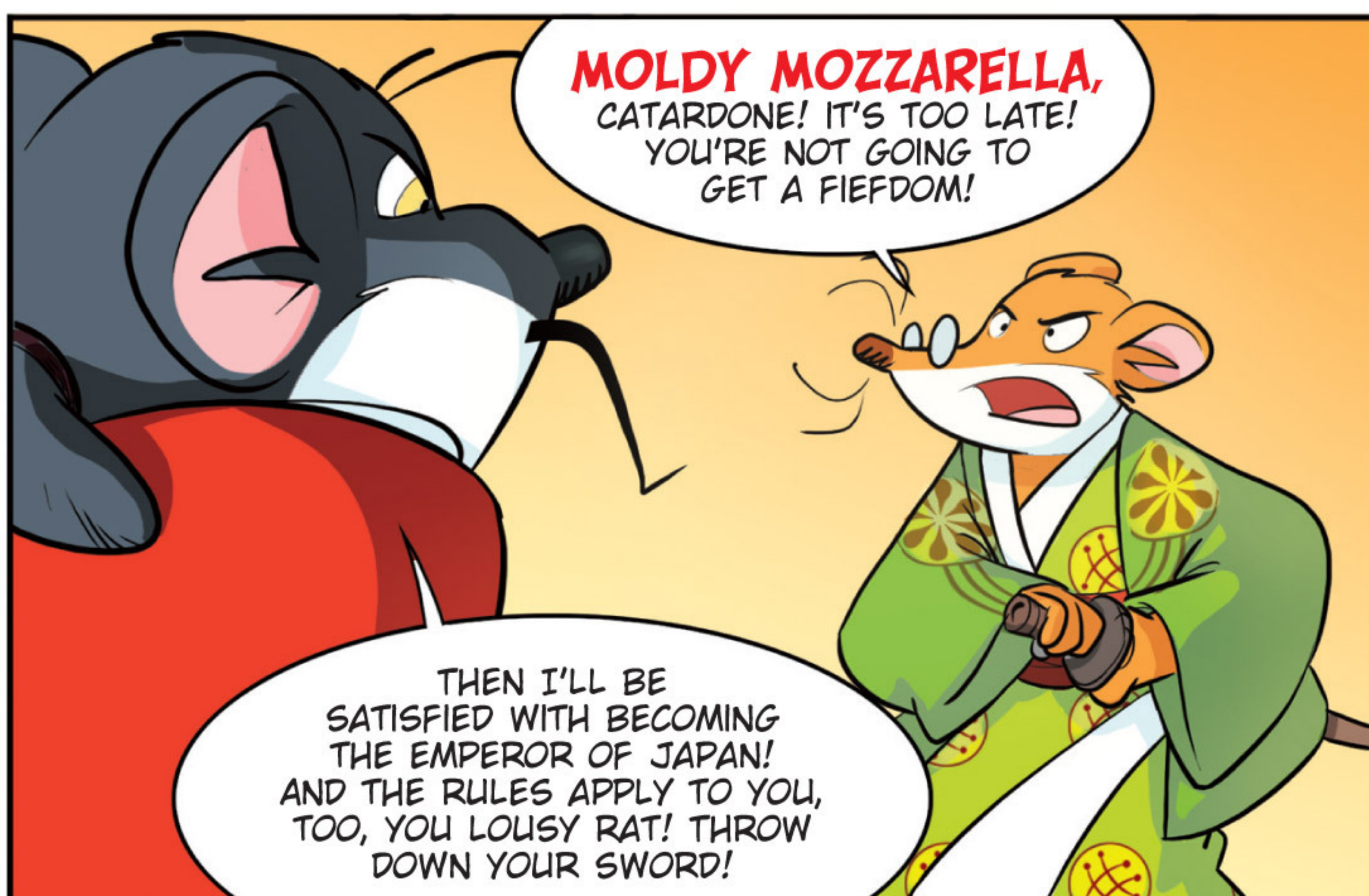
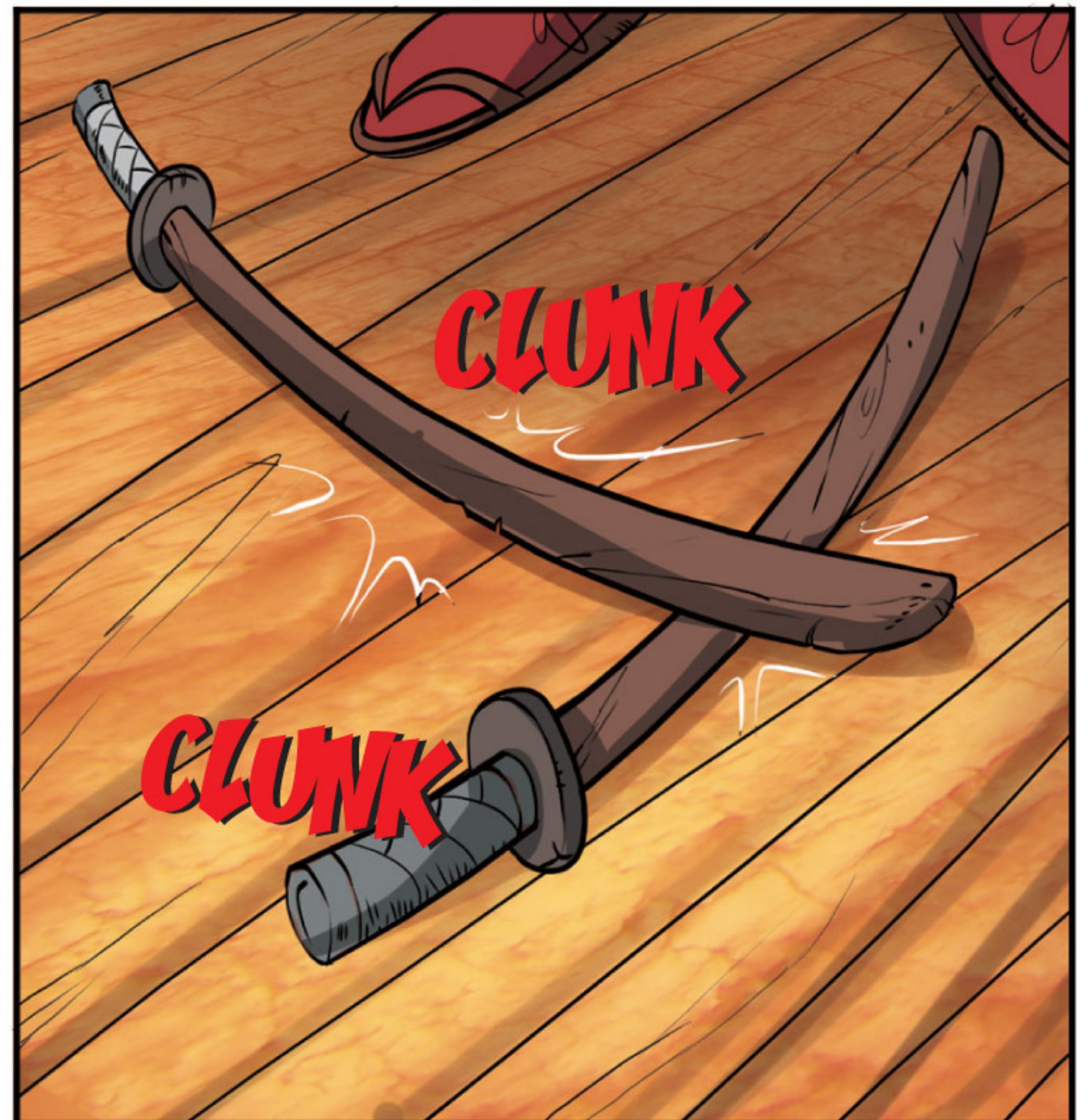
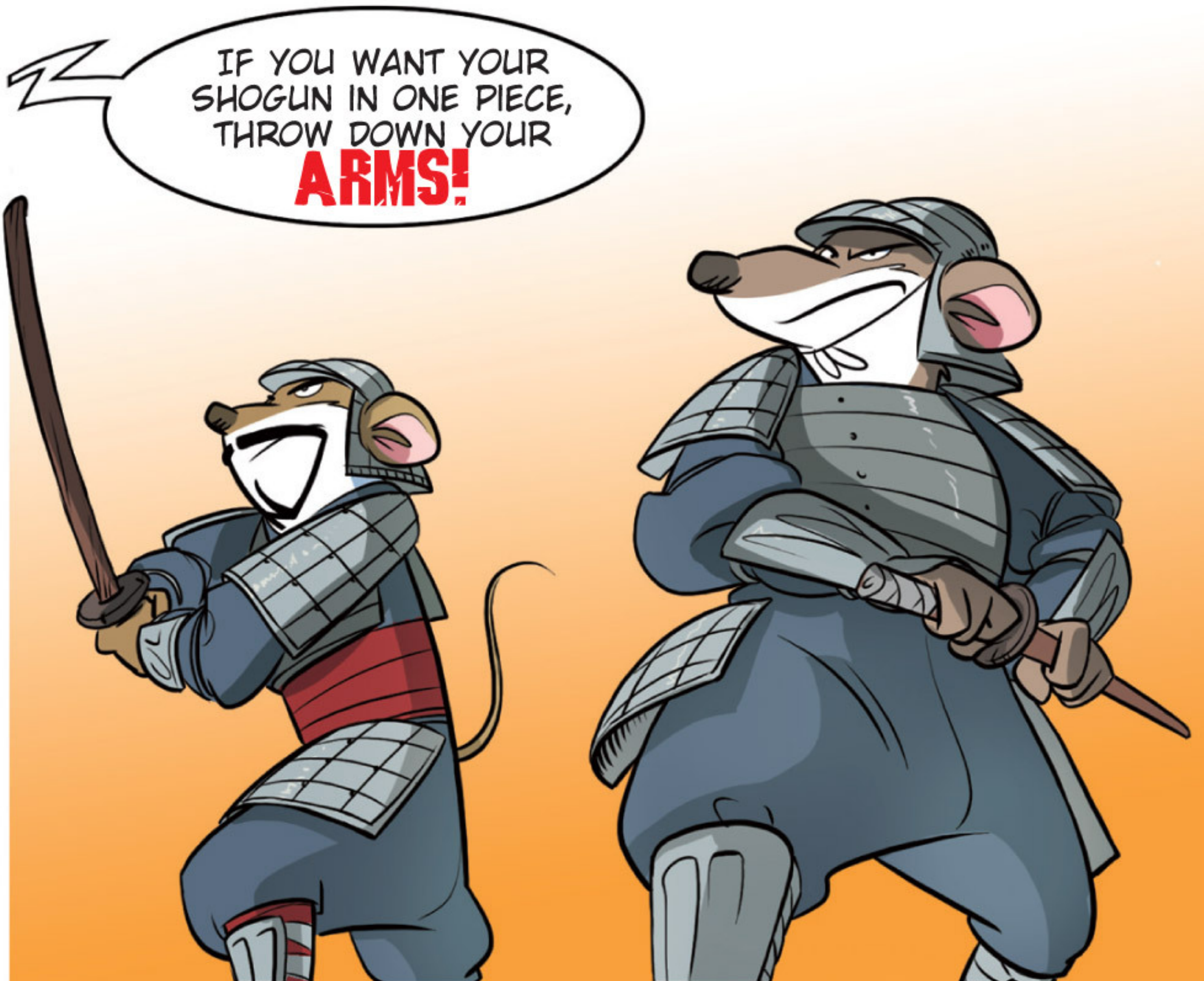




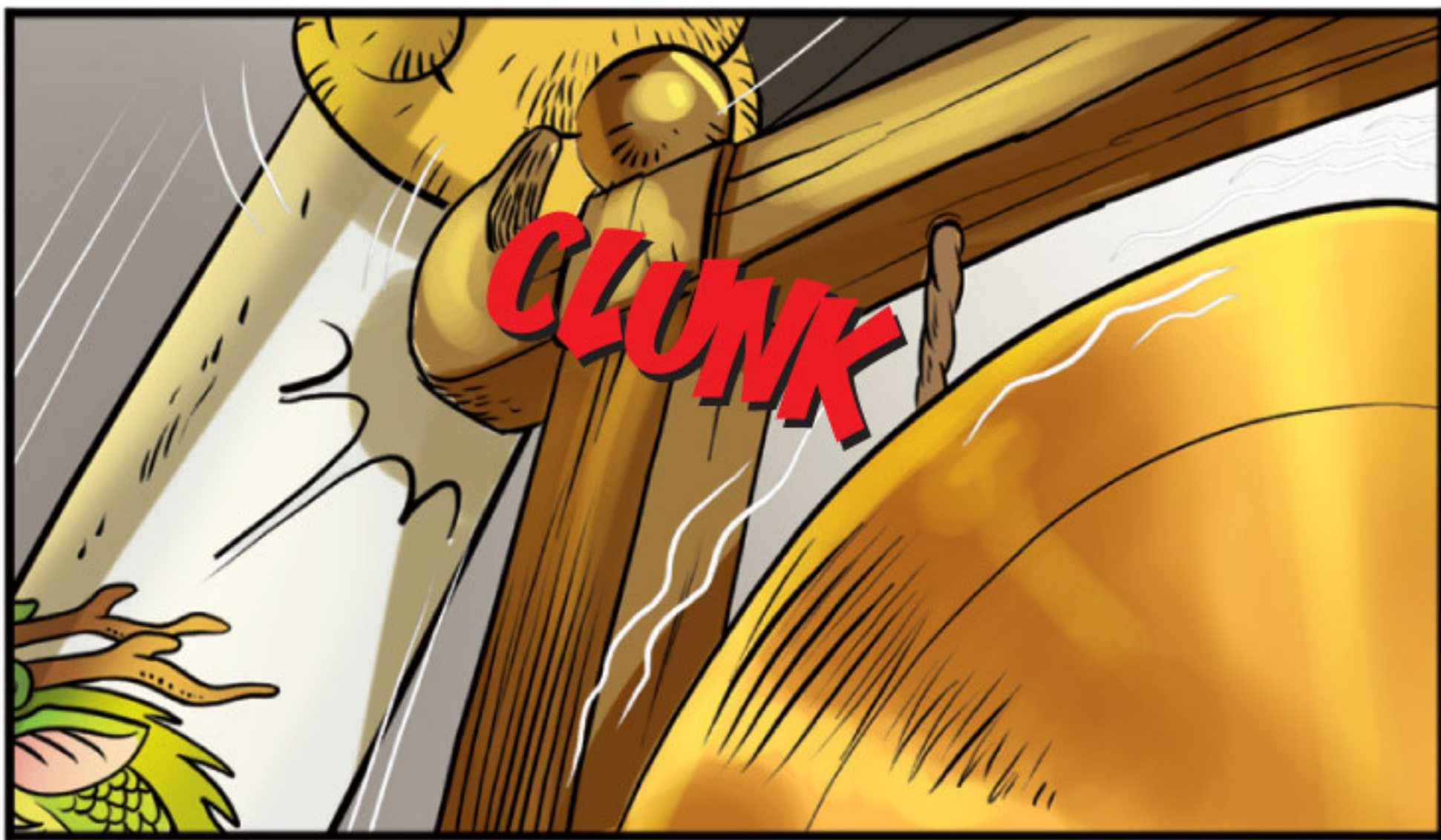
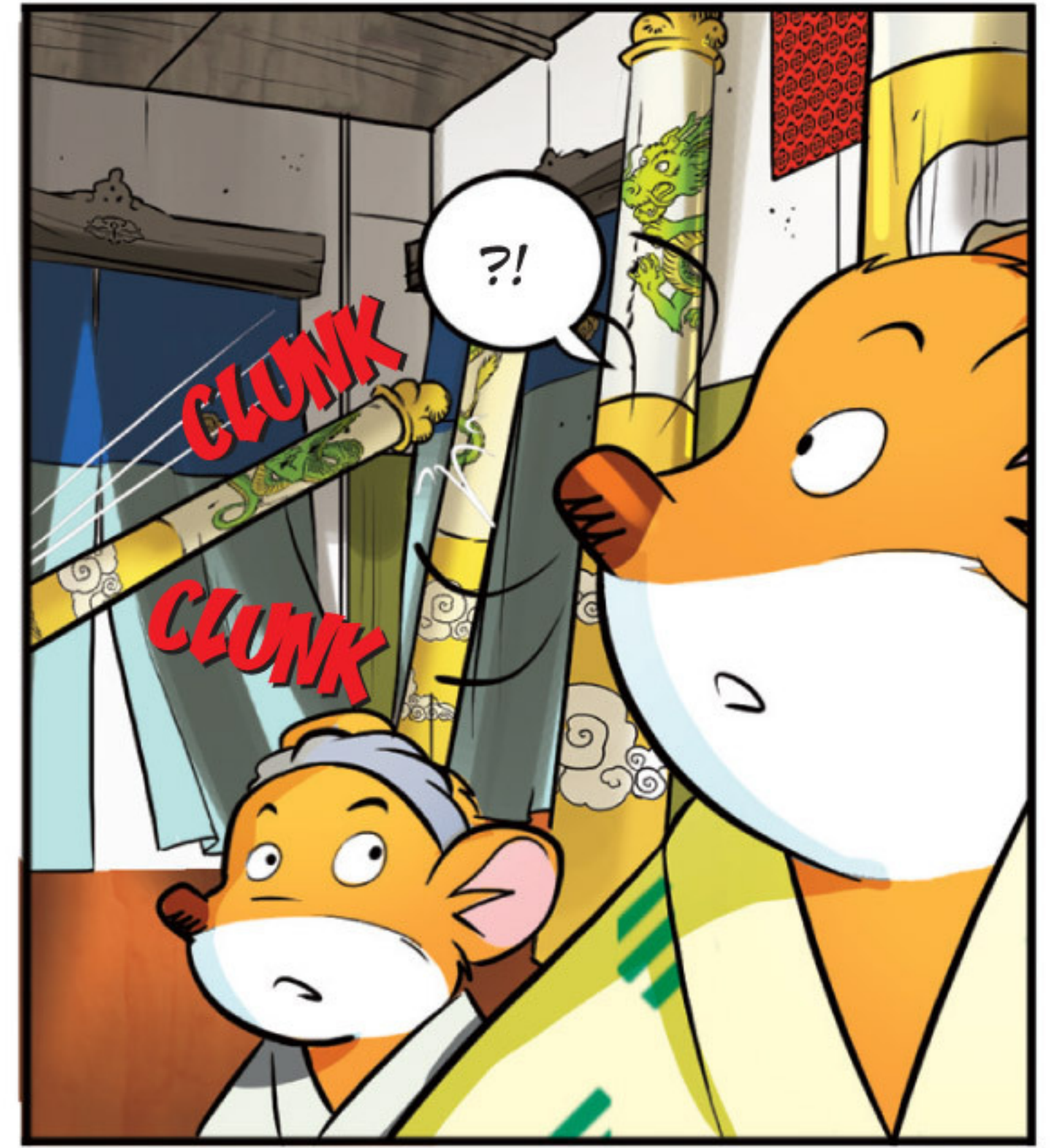
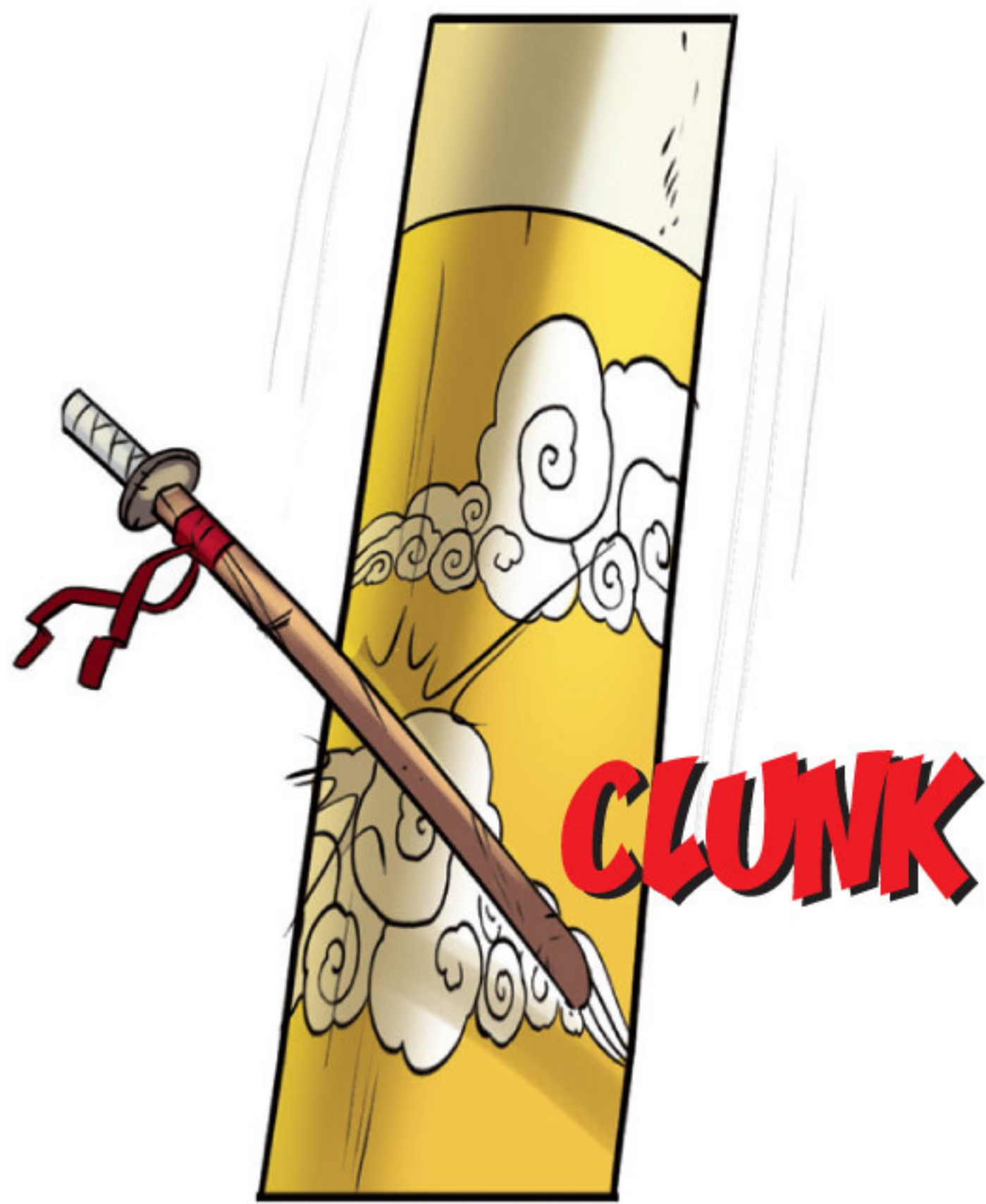






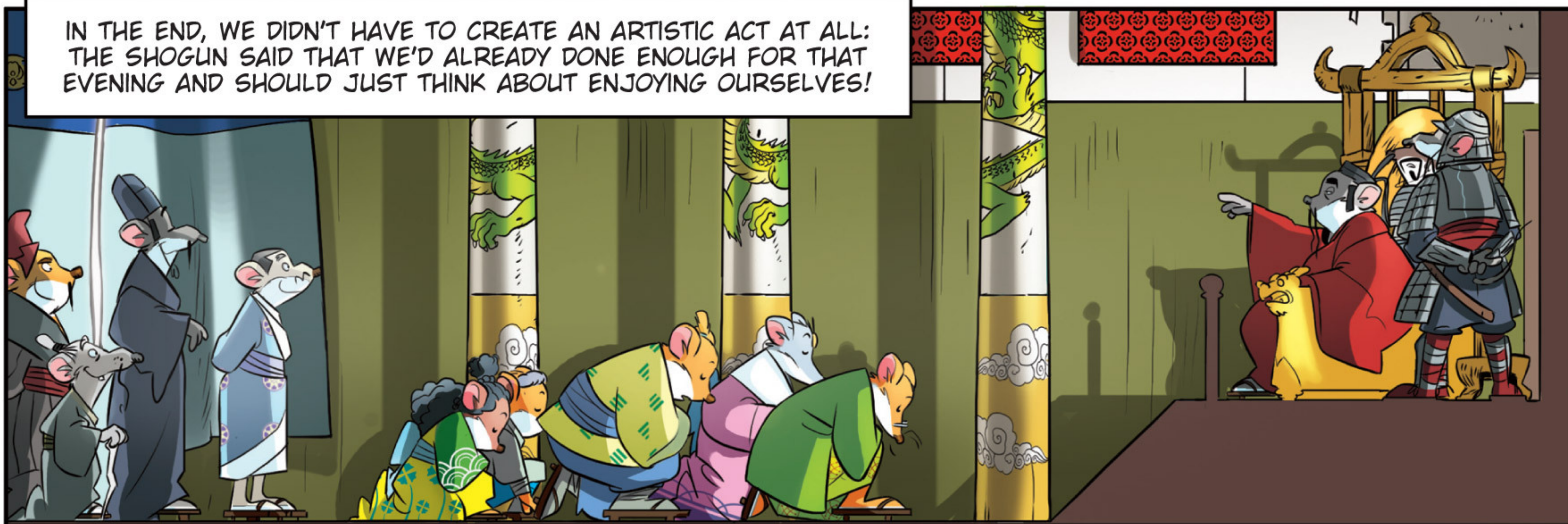


*CRUSH HIM!

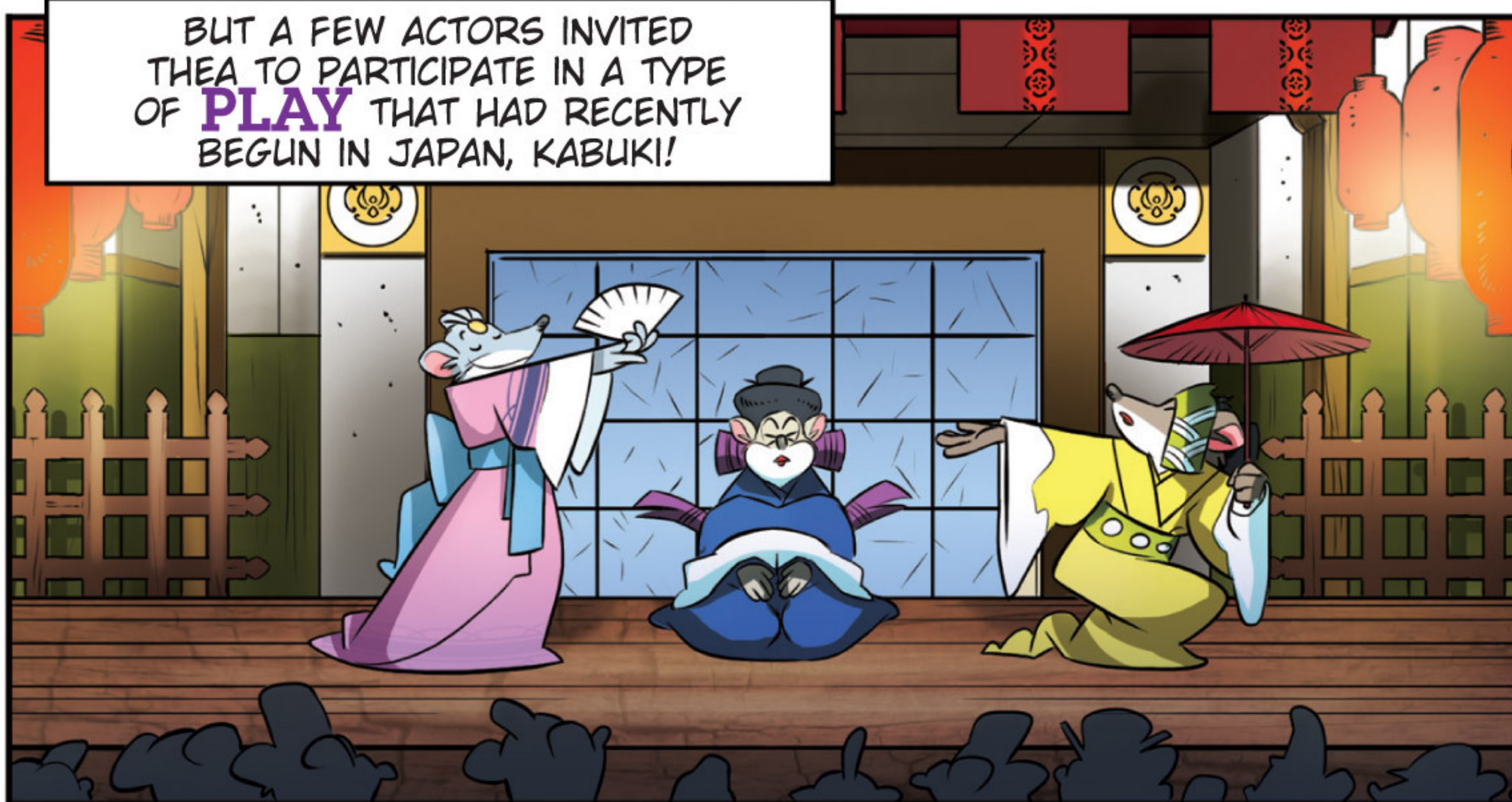




IN THE END, WE DIDN'T HAVE TO CREATE AN ARTISTIC ACT AT ALL:
THE SHOGUN SAID THAT WE'D ALREADY DONE ENOUGH FOR THAT
EVENING AND SHOULD JUST THINK ABOUT ENJOYING OURSELVES!



BUT A FEW ACTORS INVITED
THEA TO PARTICIPATE IN A TYPE
OF **PLAY** THAT HAD RECENTLY
BEGUN IN JAPAN, KABUKI!

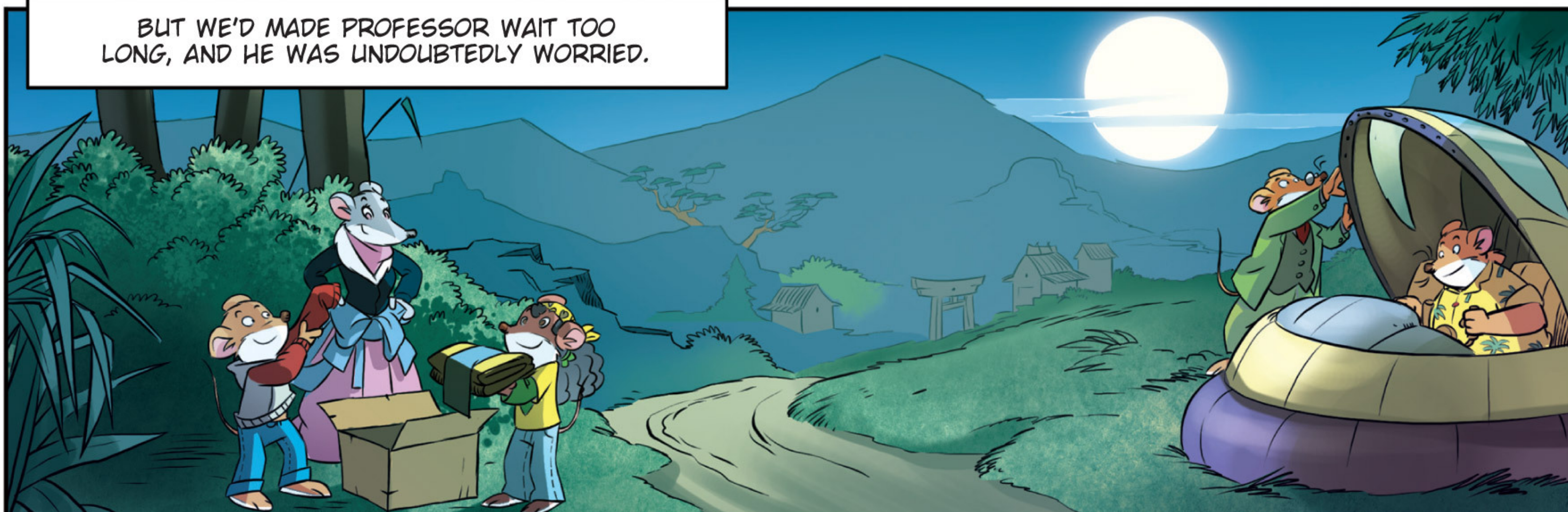


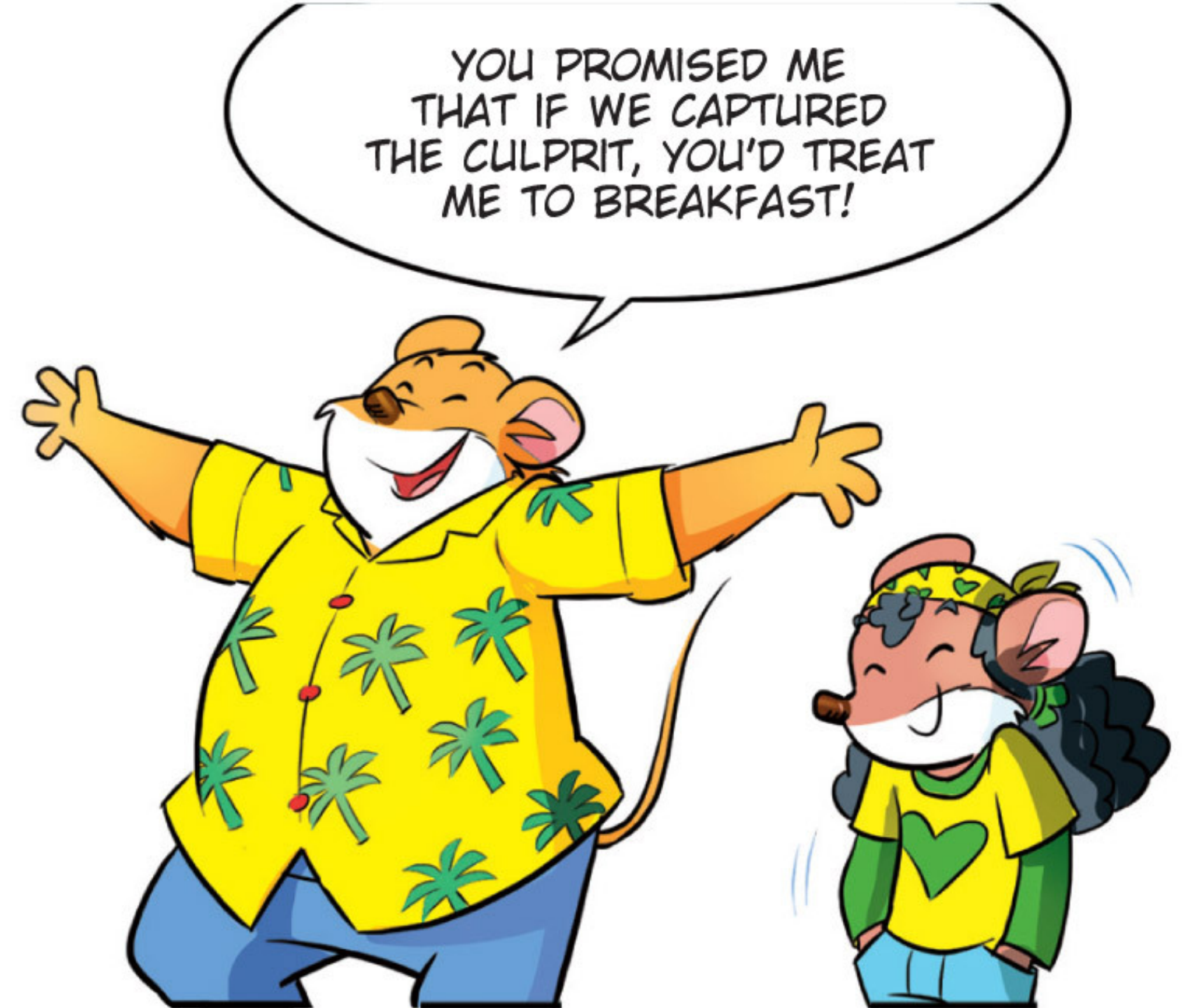
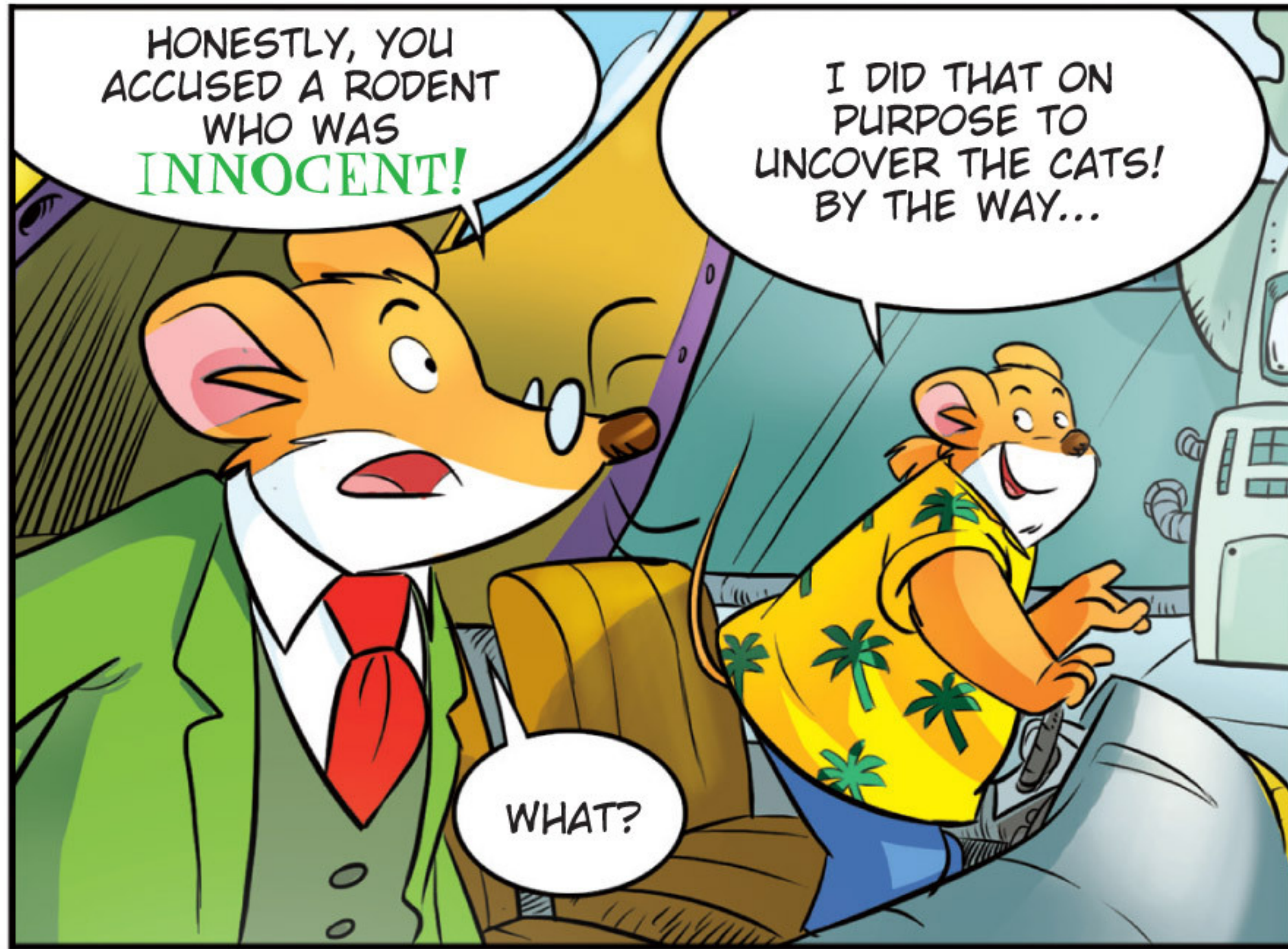
KABUKI -- A FORM OF
POPULAR THEATER THAT
BEGAN AT THE START OF
1600, CHARACTERIZED BY A
VERY ELABORATE STYLE, IN
WHICH MUSIC AND DANCE ARE
VERY IMPORTANT. IN THE
BEGINNING, IT WAS ONLY
PERFORMED BY WOMEN, BUT
THEN MEN REPLACED THEM.
KABUKI PLAYS RETELL THE
DEEDS OF HISTORICAL
FIGURES AND EVENTS THAT
REALLY HAPPENED.

WHEN IT WAS TIME FOR US TO GO, WE WERE VERY SAD
TO LEAVE SUCH A NICE CELEBRATION, BUT WE WERE
HAPPY TO HAVE SAVED THE HISTORY OF JAPAN!



BUT WE'D MADE PROFESSOR WAIT TOO
LONG, AND HE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY WORRIED.







Watch Out For PAPERCUTZ

Welcome to the time-tripping twelfth GERONIMO STILTON graphic novel from Papercutz, the cheese-loving folks dedicated to publishing great graphic novels for all ages. I'm Salicrup, *Jim Salicrup*, the Editor-in-Chief around here, happy that my job isn't even half as dangerous as being editor of The Rodent's Gazette!

Wow! I was thrilled just to know that this GERONIMO STILTON graphic novel would be taking place in Japan in 1603, but when I discovered that Thea Stilton was back, as well—I simply can't tell you how excited I was! **MOLDY MOZZARELLA!** THEA STILTON #1 "The Secret of Whale Island" is coming soon, and fans couldn't be any happier! While Thea actually does appear in the series, the real stars are the Thea Sisters, five students at Mouseford College, who want to become journalists like their hero, Thea Stilton! If you love Thea Stilton you'll want to pick up THEA STILTON #1 "The Secret of Whale Island"! Everyone's talking about how Thea may now become the real super-star in the Stilton family! Even if she sort of made a big boo-boo when she tried to perform...



The above scene is a great example of how much the world has changed! It's hard to believe that there was a time when women weren't allowed to become actors, and now, through the wonder of time travel, that same woman is such a successful journalist that she's inspiring a whole new generation of girls to follow in her footsteps.

But why should the Stiltons have all the fun? How would you like to take a short, quick trip through time? Simply turn the page and you'll see actual pages from the very next GERONIMO STILTON graphic novel in your future: "The Fastest Train in the West"! Ironically, your peek into the future is set in the Old West! That's what we love to call a Time Paradox, something that doesn't really make any sense. Something that should be impossible, yet there it is!

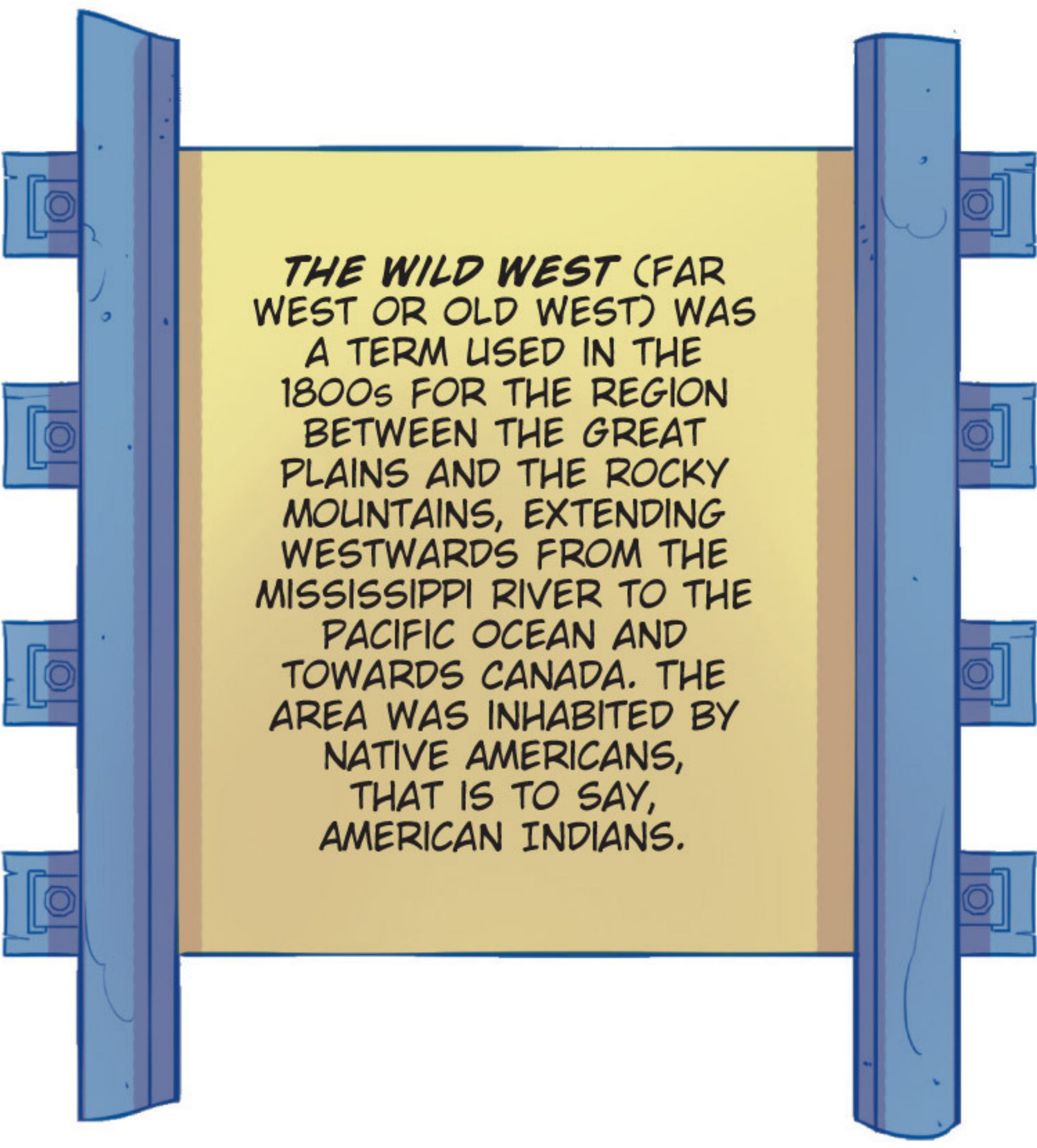
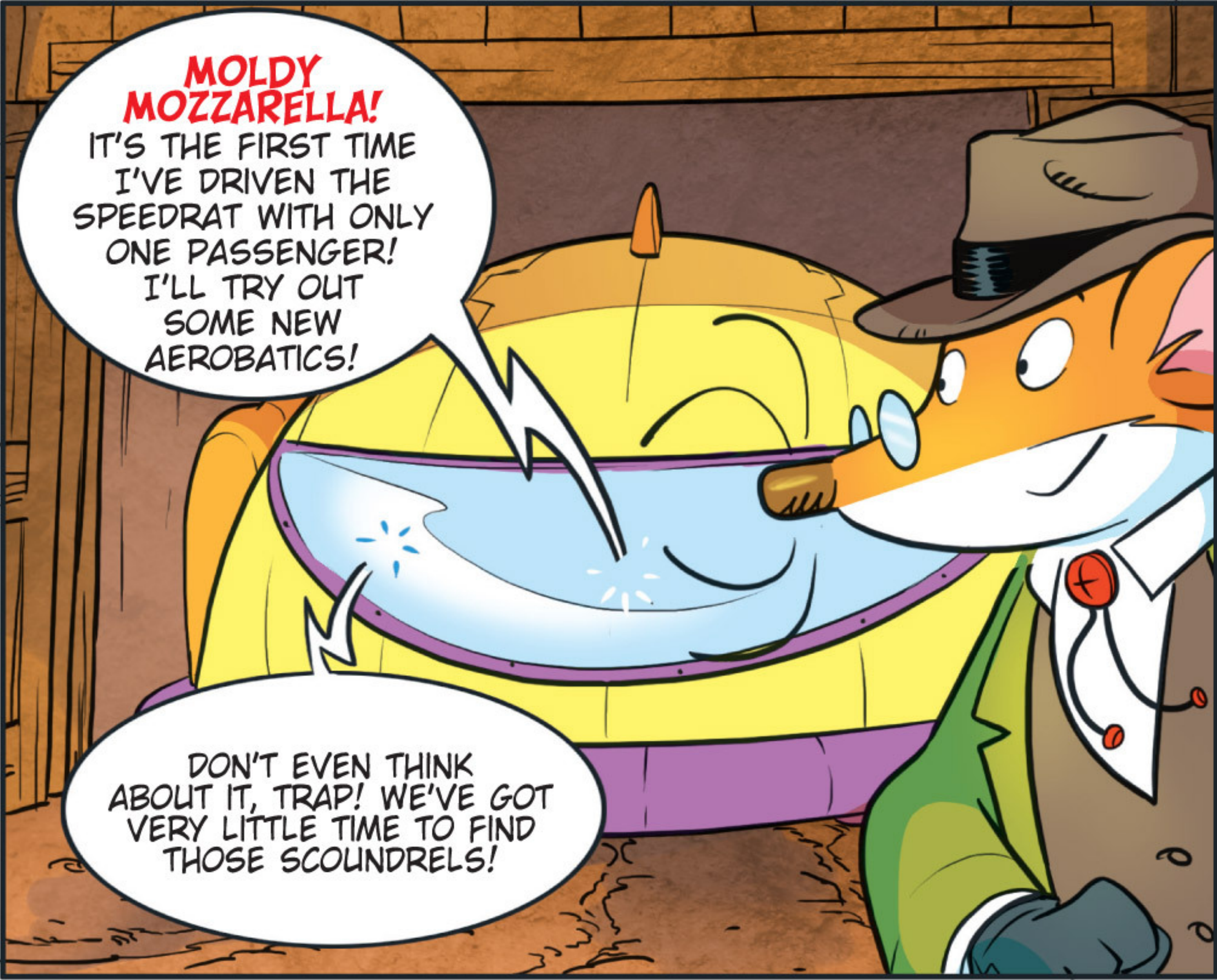
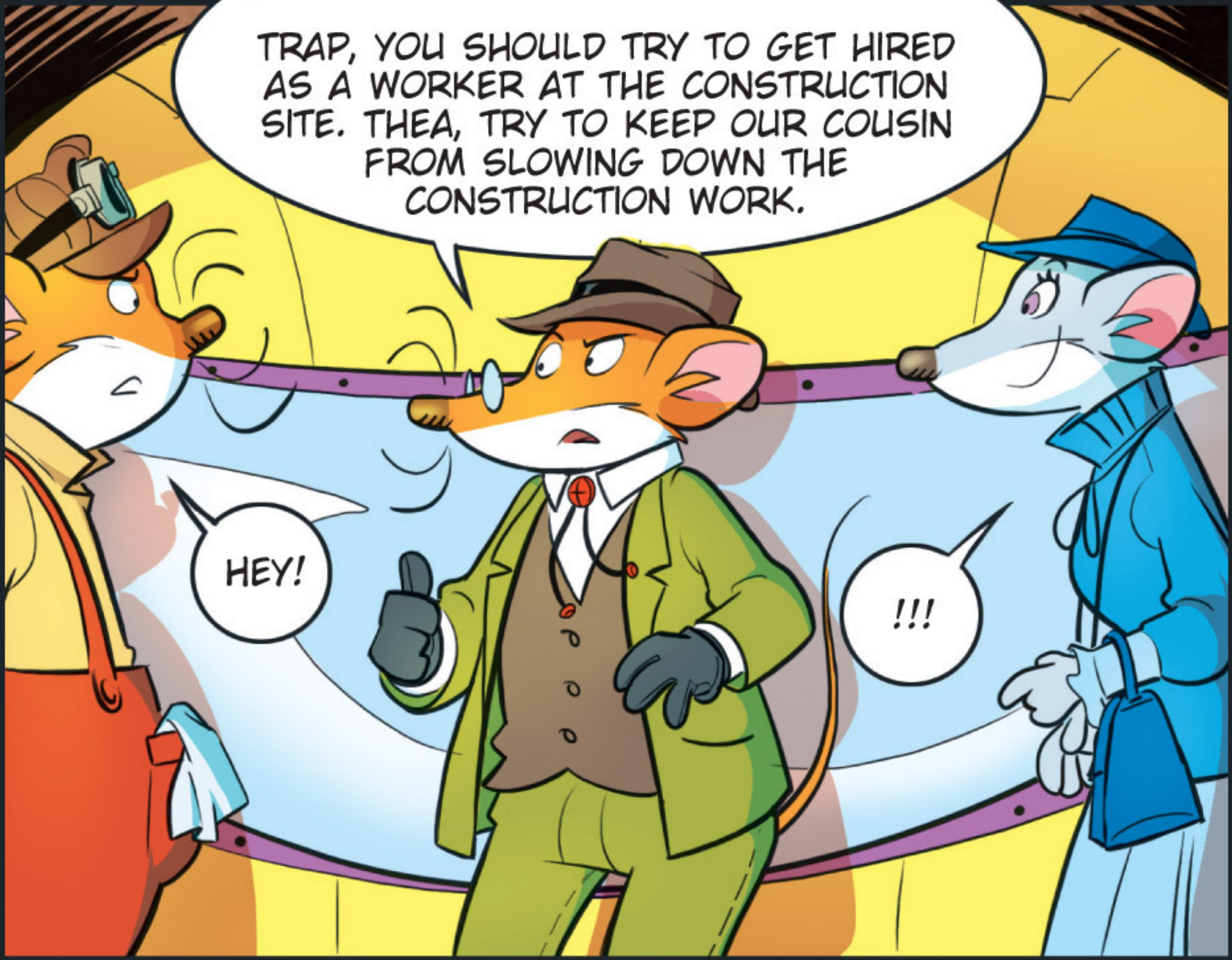
See you in the future!

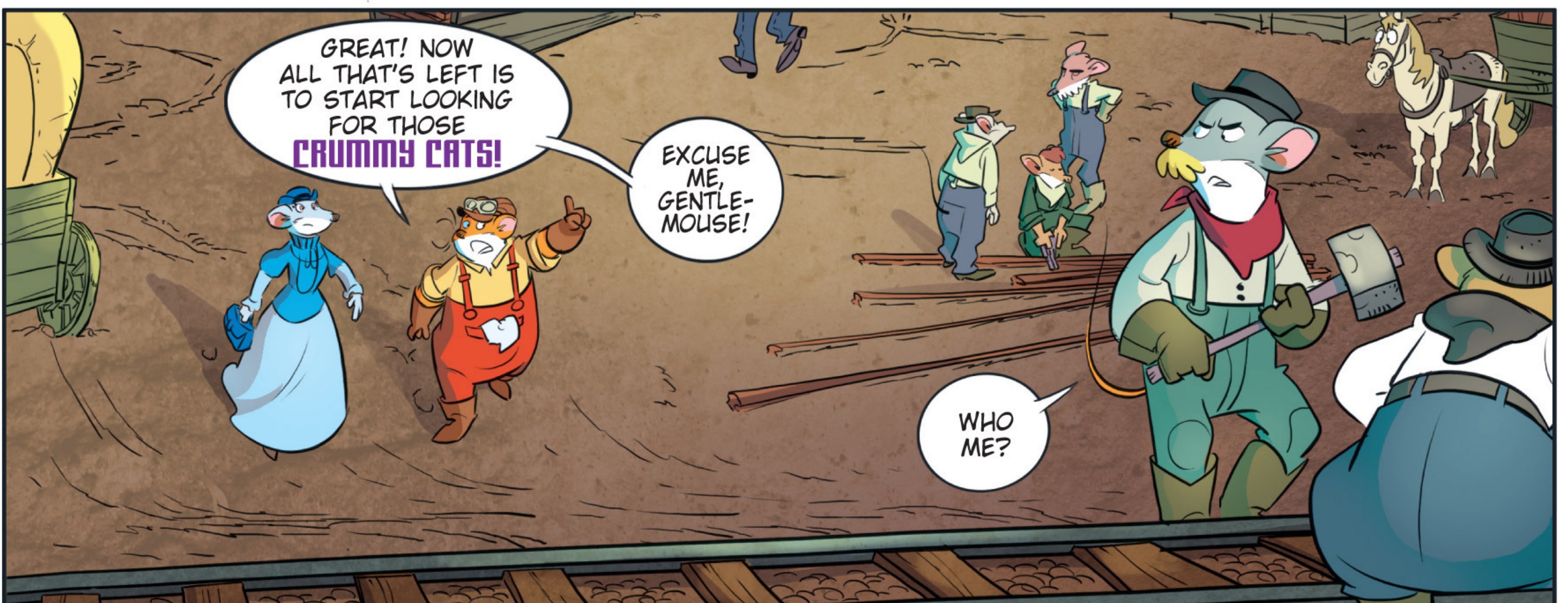
Jim

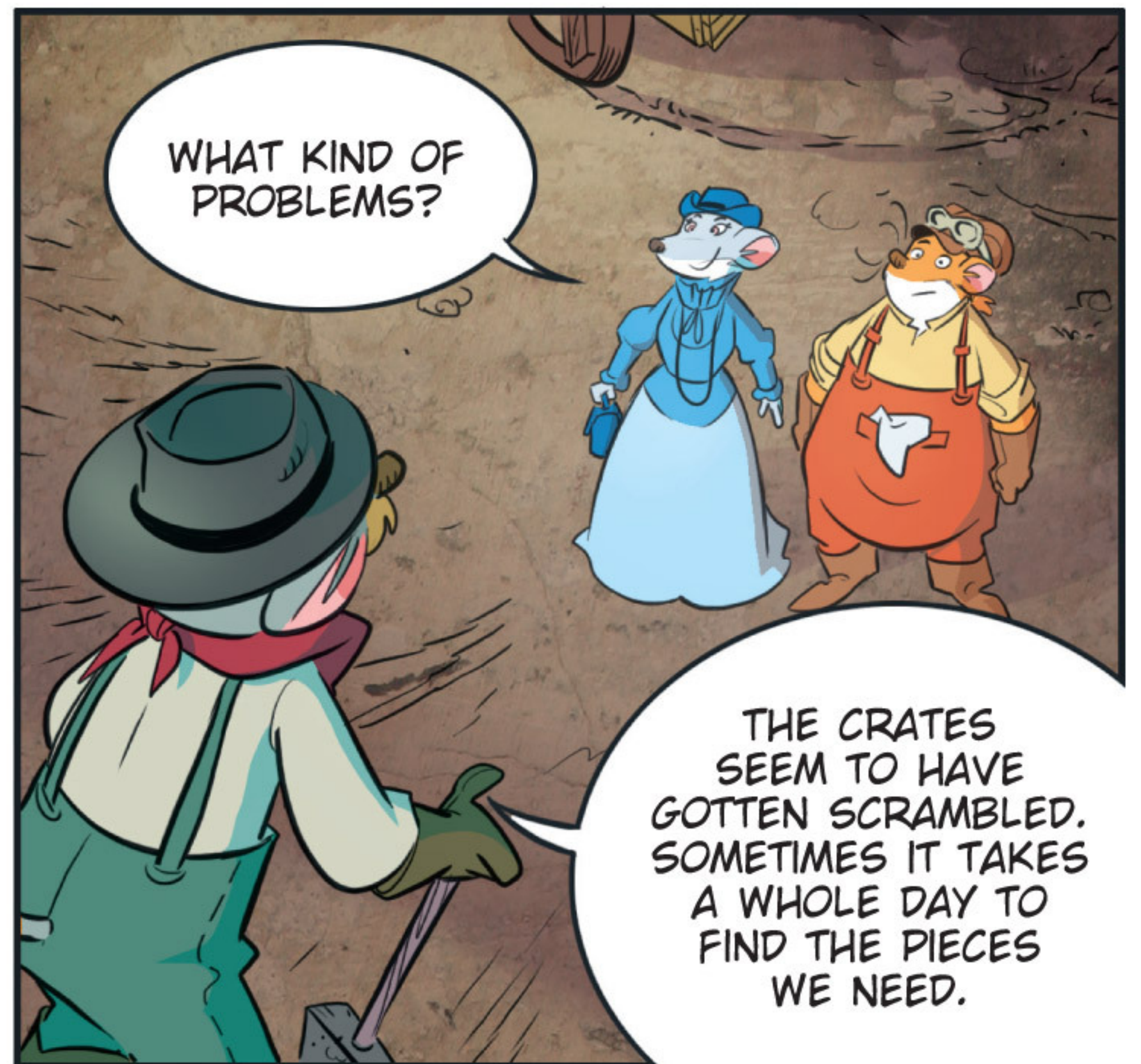
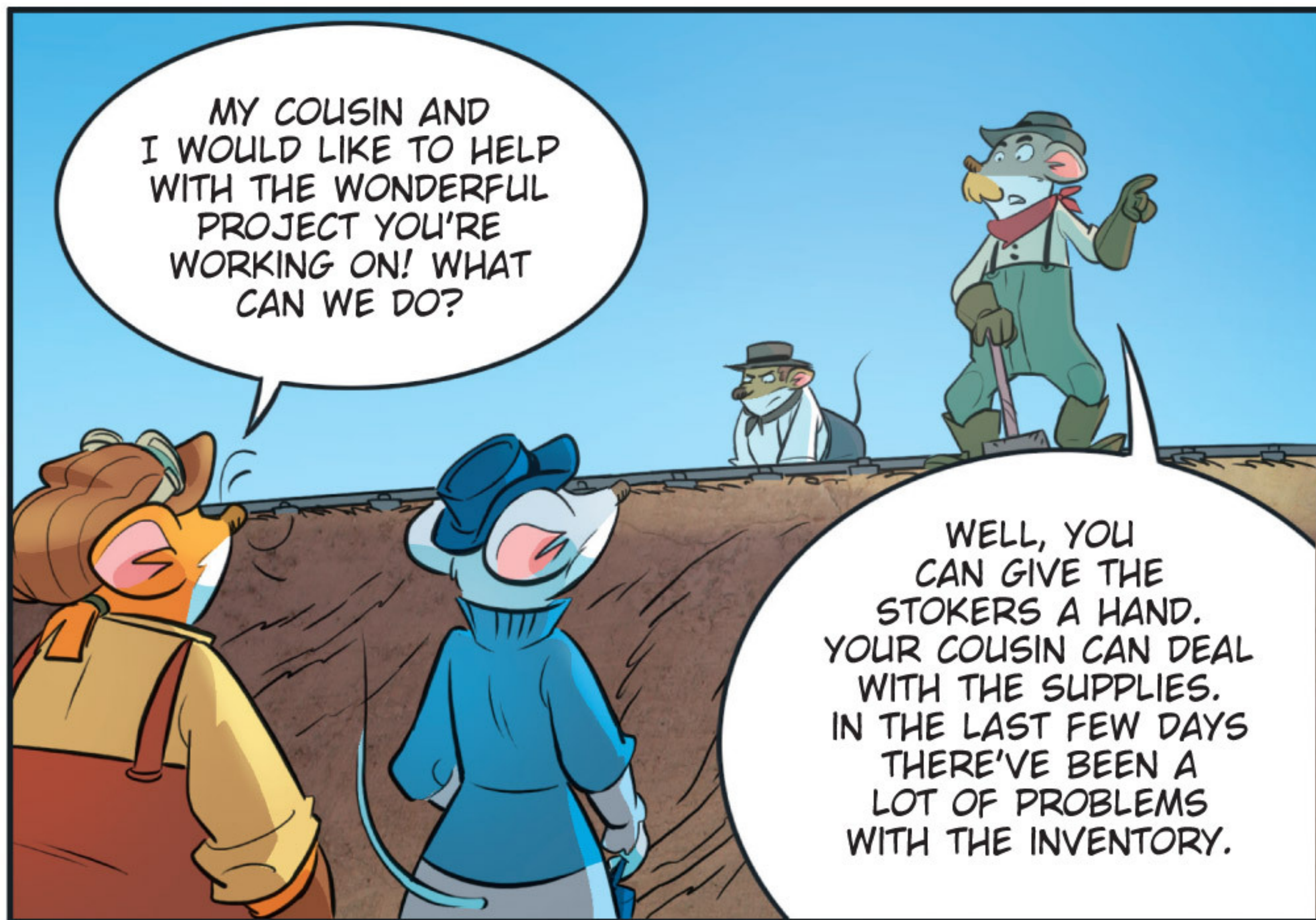
STAY IN TOUCH!

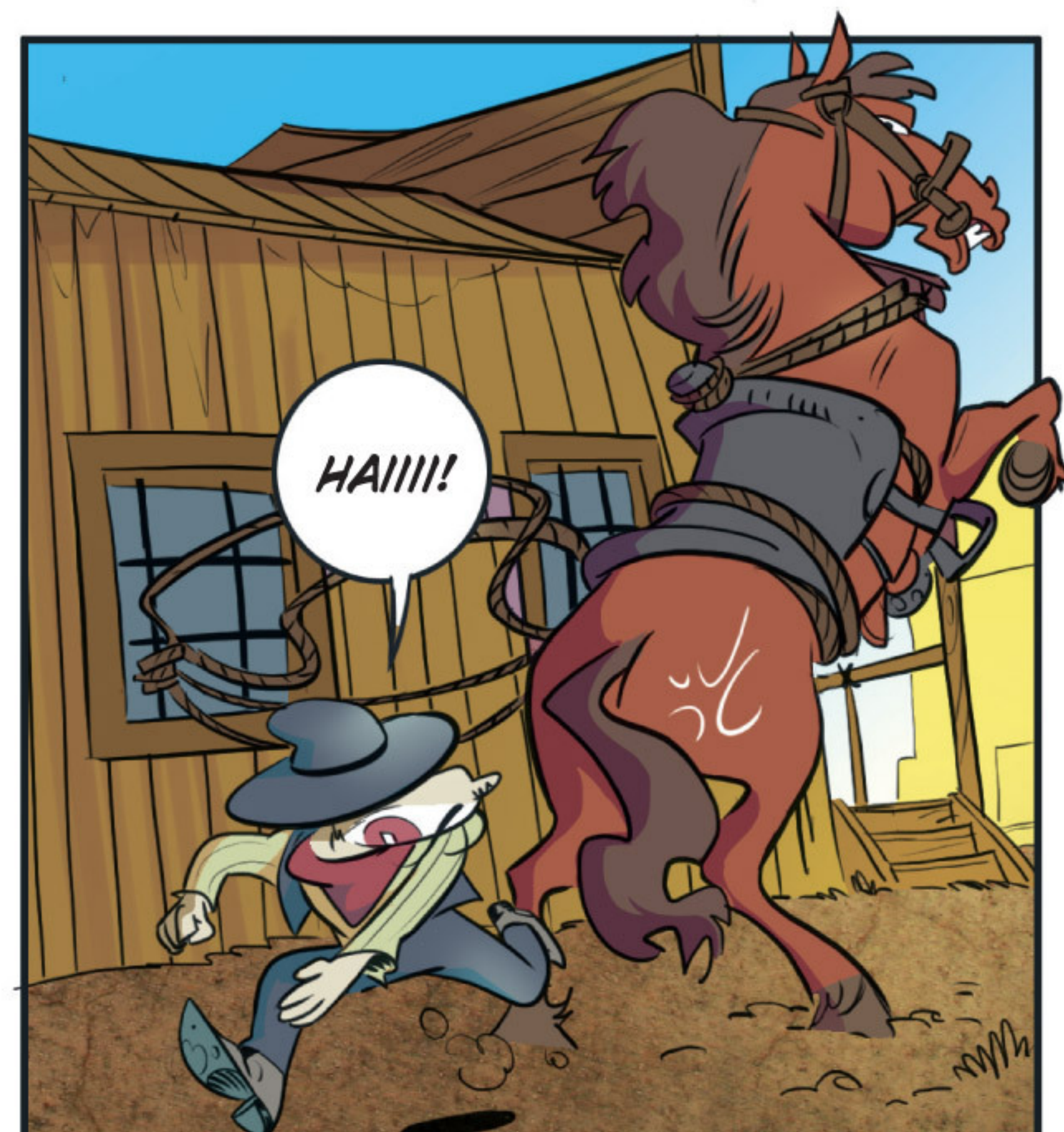
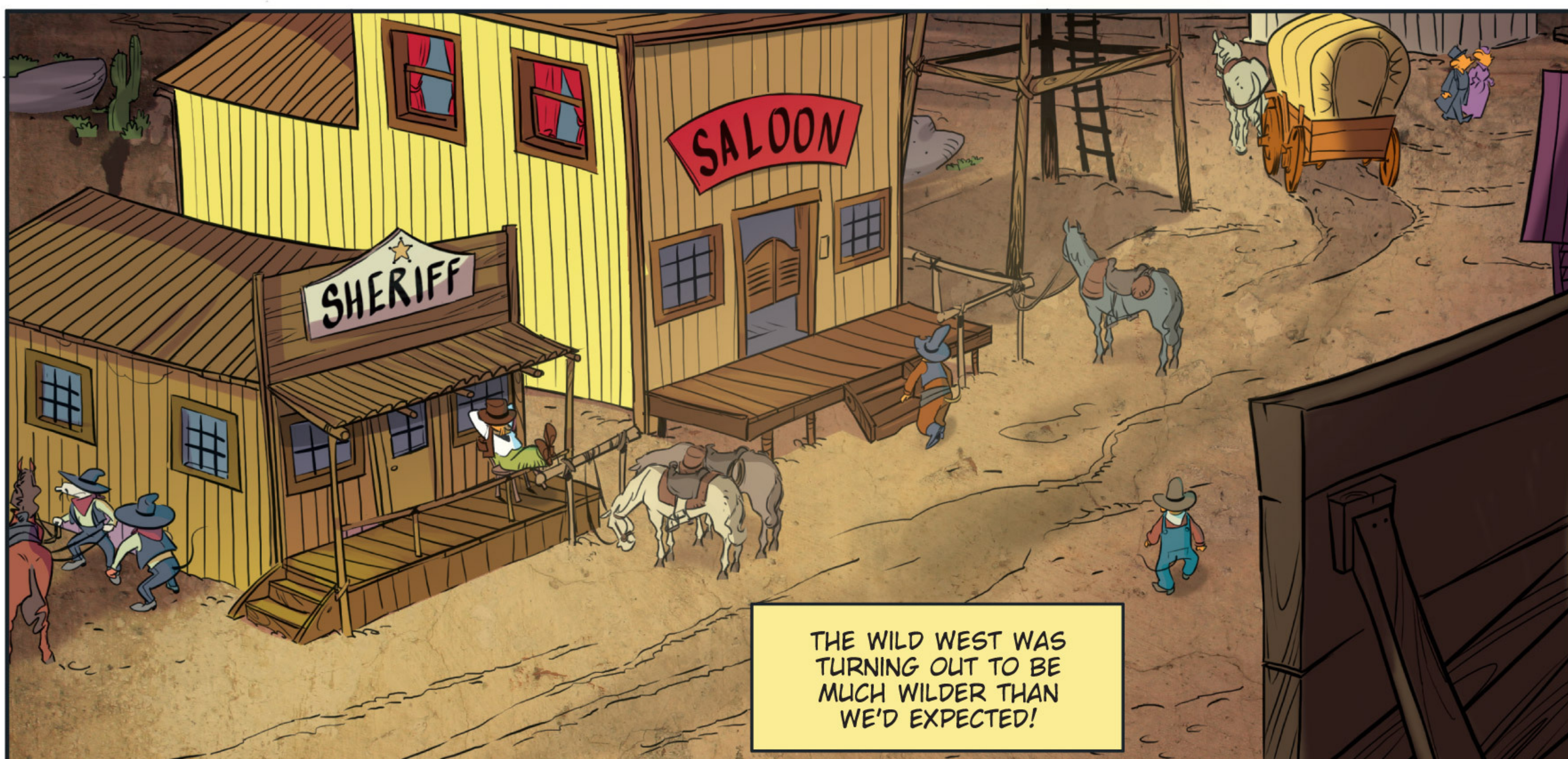
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Special preview of GERONIMO STILTON #13 “The Fastest Train in the West”!









Don't miss GERONIMO STILTON #13!

Geronimo Stilton

**knows
how to deal
with annoying
oranges!**

GERONIMO STILTON IS THE EDITOR OF THE RODENT'S GAZETTE, THE MOST FAMOUS PAPER ON MOUSE ISLAND. IN HIS FREE TIME HE LOVES TO TELL FUN, HAPPY STORIES. IN THIS ADVENTURE, GERONIMO HAS TO FACE HIS WORST ENEMIES, THE PIRATE CATS, WHO HAVE DISCOVERED A WAY TO TRAVEL BACK IN TIME AND CHANGE HISTORY...

JAPAN, 1603. GERONIMO AND HIS FRIENDS DON'T KNOW WHY THE PIRATE CATS WENT BACK TO THIS PRECISE POINT IN TIME, BUT THEY ARE SURE THE PIRATE CATS ARE UP TO NO GOOD! POSING AS A TRAVELING TROUPE OF ACTORS, GERONIMO SOMEHOW MANAGES TO CONVINCE THE LOCALS THAT HE'S REALLY A SHOGUN, AND NOT THE FIRST SAMURAI! WILL GERONIMO BE ABLE TO UNCOVER THE PIRATE CATS' PLAN IN TIME TO STOP THEM? OR HAVE THE PIRATE CATS FINALLY WON?

"Geronimo fans will eat this up quicker than a wheel of cheddar."

-Washington Times

"Is it fact? Is it fiction? It's faction, and it's fun!" **-Shelf-Employed**



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